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ITALIAN JOURNEYS

VOL. I.

By
W. D. HOWELL'S



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ITALIAN JOURNEYS.

VOL. I.

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ITALIAN JOURNEYS

BY

WILLIAM D. HOWELLS



Author's Edition

VOL. I.

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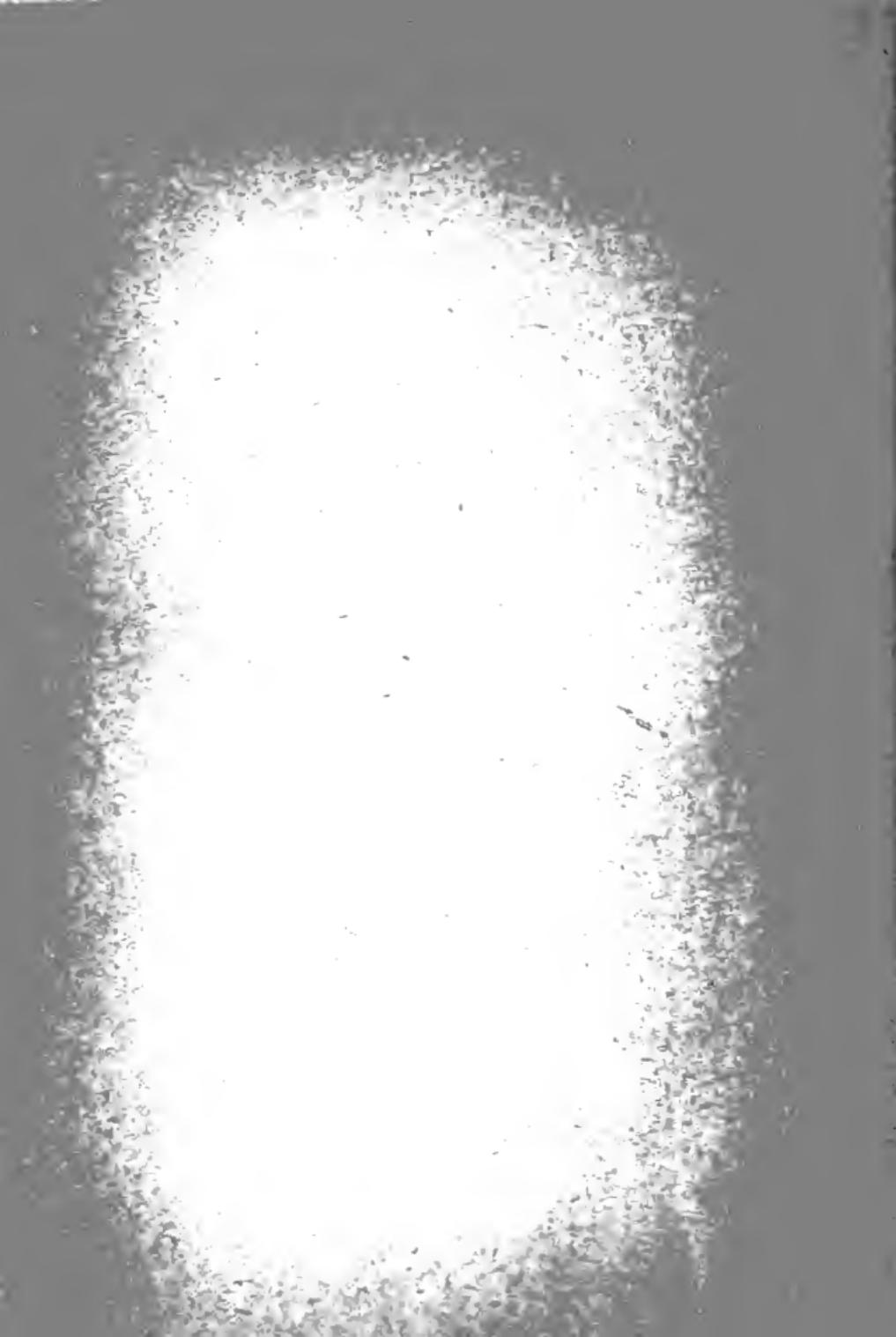
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THE ROAD TO ROME FROM VENICE.

I.

LEAVING VENICE.

WE did not know, when we started from home in Venice, on the 8th of November 1864, that we had taken the longest road to Rome. We thought that of all the proverbial paths to the Eternal City that leading to Padua, and thence through Ferrara and Bologna to Florence, and so down the sea-shore from Leghorn to Civita Vecchia, was the best, the briefest, and the cheapest. Who could have dreamed that this path, so wisely and carefully chosen, would lead us to Genoa, conduct us on ship-board, toss us four dizzy days and nights, and set us down, void, battered, and bewildered, in Naples? Luckily,

“The moving accident is not my trade,”
for there are events of this journey (now

happily at an end) which, if I recounted them with unsparing sincerity, would for ever deter the reader from taking any road to Rome.

Though, indeed, what is Rome, after all, when you come to it?

II.

FROM PADUA TO FERRARA.

AS far as to Ferrara there was no sign of deviation from the direct line in our road, and the company was well enough. We had a Swiss family in the car with us to Padua, and they told us how they were going home to their mountains from Russia, where they had spent nineteen years of their lives. They were mother and father and only daughter, and the last, without ever having seen her ancestral country, was so Swiss in her yet childish beauty, that she filled the morning twilight with vague images of glacial height, blue lake, snug chalet, and whatever else of picturesque there is in paint and print about Switzerland. Of course, as the light grew brighter these images melted away, and left only a little frost upon the window-pane.

The mother was restively anxious at nearing her country, and told us everything of its loveliness and happiness. Nineteen years of absence had not robbed it of the poorest

charm, and I hope that seeing it again took nothing from it. We said how glad we should be if we were as near America as she was to Switzerland. "America!" she screamed; "you come from America! Dear God, the world is wide—the world is wide!" The thought was so paralysing that it silenced the fat little lady for a moment, and gave her husband time to express his sympathy with us in our war, which he understood perfectly well. He trusted that the revolution to perpetuate slavery must fail, and he hoped that the war would soon end, for it made cotton very dear.

Europe is material: I doubt if, after Victor Hugo and Garibaldi, there were many upon that continent whose enthusiasm for American unity (which is European freedom) was not somewhat chilled by the expensiveness of cotton. The fabrics were all doubled in price, and every man in Europe paid tribute in hard money to the devotion with which we prosecuted the war, and, incidentally, interrupted the cultivation of cotton.

We shook hands with our friends, and dismounted at Padua, where we were to take the diligence for the Po. In the diligence their loss was more than made good by the

company of the only honest man in Italy. Of course this honest man had been a great sufferer from his own countrymen, and I wish that all English and American tourists, who think themselves the sole victims of publican rapacity and deceit in Italy, could have heard our honest man's talk. The truth is, these ingenious people prey upon their own kind with an avidity quite as keen as that with which they devour strangers ; and I am half-persuaded that a ready-witted foreigner fares better among them than a traveller of their own nation. Italians will always pretend, on any occasion, that you have been plundered much worse than they, but the reverse often happens. They give little in fees ; but their landlord, their porter, their driver, and their boatmen pillage them with the same impunity that they rob an Inglesi. As for this honest man in the diligence, he had suffered such enormities at the hands of the Paduans, from which we had just escaped, and at the hands of the Ferrarese, into which we were rushing (at the rate of five miles scant an hour), that I was almost minded to stop between the nests of those brigands and pass the rest of my days at Rovigo, where the honest man lived. His talk was amusingly instructive, and went to illustrate the strong

municipal spirit which still dominates all Italy, and which is more inimical to an effectual unity among Italians than Pope or Kaiser has ever been. Our honest man of Rovigo was a *foreigner* at Padua, twenty-five miles north, and a foreigner at Ferrara, twenty-five miles south ; and throughout Italy the native of one city is an alien in another, and is as lawful prey as a Russian or an American with people who consider every stranger as sent them by the bounty of Providence to be eaten alive. Heaven knows what our honest man had paid at his hotel in Padua, but in Ferrara the other week he had been made to give five francs a piece for two small roast chickens, besides a fee to the waiter ; and he pathetically warned us to beware how we dealt with Italians. Indeed, I never met a man so thoroughly persuaded of the rascality of his nation and of his own exceptional virtue. He took snuff with his whole person ; and he volunteered, at sight of a flock of geese, a recipe which I give the reader : Stuff a goose with sausage ; let it hang in the weather during the winter ; and in the spring cut it up and stew it, and you have an excellent and delicate soup.

But after all, our friend's talk, though constant, became dispiriting, and we were willing

when he left us. His integrity had, indeed, been so oppressive that I was glad to be swindled in the charge for our dinner at the Iron Crown, in Rovigo, and rode more cheerfully on to Ferrara.

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III.

THE PICTURESQUE, THE IMPROBABLE, AND
THE PATHETIC IN FERRARA.

I.

IT was one of the fatalities of travel, rather than any real interest in the poet, which led me to visit the prison of Tasso on the night of our arrival, which was mild and moonlit. The *portier* at the Stella d'Oro suggested the sentimental homage to sorrows which it is sometimes difficult to respect, and I went and paid this homage in the coal-cellar in which was never imprisoned the poet whose works I had not read.

The famous hospital of St. Anna, where Tasso was confined for seven years, is still an asylum for the infirm and sick, but it is no longer used as a mad-house. It stands on one of the long, silent Ferrarese streets, not far from the ducal castle, and it is said that from the window of his cell the unhappy poet could behold Leonora in her tower. It may be so ; certainly those who can believe in the

genuineness of the cell will have no trouble in believing that the vision of Tasso could pierce through several brick walls and a Doric portico, and at last comprehend the lady at her casement in the castle. We entered a modern gateway, and passed into a hall of the elder edifice, where a slim young soldier sat reading a romance of Dumas. This was the keeper of Tasso's prison ; and knowing me, by the instinct which teaches an Italian custodian to distinguish his prey, for a seeker after the True and Beautiful, he relinquished his romance, lighted a waxen taper, unbolted a heavy door with a dramatic clang, and preceded me to the cell of Tasso. We descended a little stairway, and found ourselves in a sufficiently spacious court, which was still ampler in the poet's time, and was then a garden planted with trees and flowers. On a low doorway to the right was inscribed the legend "PRIGIONE DI TASSO," and, passing through this doorway into a kind of reception-cell, we entered the poet's dungeon. It is an oblong room, with a low wagon-roof ceiling, under which it is barely possible to stand upright. A single narrow window admits the light, and the stone casing of this window has a hollow in a

certain place, which might well have been worn there by the friction of the hand that for seven years passed the prisoner his food through the small opening. The young custodian pointed to this memento of suffering, without effusion, and he drew my attention to other remarkable things in the cell, without troubling himself to palliate their improbability in the least. They were his stock in trade ; you paid your money, and took your choice of believing in them or not. On the other hand, my *portier*, an ex-valet *de place*, pumped a softly murmuring stream of enthusiasm, and expressed the freshest delight in the inspection of each object of interest.

One still faintly discerns among the vast number of names with which the walls of the ante-cell are be-written, that of Lamartine. The name of Byron, which was once deeply graven in the stucco, had been scooped away by the Grand Duke of Tuscany (so the custodian said), and there is only part of a capital B now visible. But the cell itself is still fragrant of associations with the noble bard, who, according to the story related to Valery, caused himself to be locked up in it, and there, with his head fallen upon his breast, and frequently smit-

ing his brow, spent two hours in pacing the floor with great strides. It is a touching picture; but its pathos becomes somewhat embarrassing when you enter the cell, and see the impossibility of taking more than three generous paces without turning. When Byron issued forth, after his exercise, he said (still according to Valery) to the custodian: "I thank thee, good man! The thoughts of Tasso are now all in my mind and heart."

"A short time after his departure from Ferrara," adds the Frenchman, maliciously, "he composed his 'Lament of Tasso,' a mediocre result from such inspiration." No doubt all this is coloured, for the same author adds another tint to heighten the absurdity of the spectacle: he declares that Byron spent part of his time in the cell in writing upon the ceiling Lamartine's verses on Tasso, which he misspelled. The present visitor has no means of judging of the truth concerning this, for the lines of the poet have been so smoked by the candles of successive pilgrims in their efforts to get light on them, that they are now utterly illegible. But if it is uncertain what were Byron's emotions on visiting the prison of Tasso, there is no doubt about Lady Morgan's: she "experi-

enced a suffocating emotion ; her heart failed her on entering that cell ; and she satisfied a melancholy curiosity at the cost of a most painful sensation."

I find this amusing fact stated in a translation of her ladyship's own language, in a clever guide-book called *Il Servitore di Piazza*, which I bought at Ferrara, and from which, I confess, I have learnt all I know to confirm me in my doubt of Tasso's prison. The Count Avventi, who writes this book, prefaces it by saying that he is a *valet de place* who knows how to read and write, and he employs these unusual gifts with singular candour and clearness. No one, he says, before the nineteenth century, ever dreamed of calling the cellar in question Tasso's prison, and it was never before that time made the shrine of sentimental pilgrimage, though it has since been visited by every traveller who has passed through Ferrara. It was used during the poet's time to hold charcoal and lime ; and not long ago died an old servant of the hospital, who remembered its use for that purpose. It is damp, close, and dark, and Count Avventi thinks it hardly possible that a delicate courtier could have lived seven years in a place unwholesome enough to kill a stout labourer in two months ; while

it seems to him not probable that Tasso should have received there the visit of princes and other distinguished persons whom Duke Alfonso allowed to see him, or that a prisoner who was often permitted to ride about the city in a carriage should have been thrust back into such a cavern on his return to the hospital. "After this," says our *valet de place* who knows how to read and write, "visit the prison of Tasso, certain that *in the hospital of St. Anna* that great man was confined for many years;" and, with this chilly warning, leaves his reader to his emotions.

I am afraid that if as frank caution were uttered in regard to other memorable places, the objects of interest in Italy would dwindle sadly in number, and the *valets de place*, whether they know how to read and write or not, would be starved to death. Even the learning of Italy is poetic ; and an Italian would rather enjoy a fiction than know a fact—in which preference I am not ready to pronounce him unwise. But this characteristic of his embroiders the stranger's progress throughout the whole land with fanciful improbabilities ; so that if one use his eyes half as much as his wonder, he must see how much better it would have been to visit, in fancy, scenes that have an interest

so largely imaginary. The utmost he can make out of the most famous place is, that it is possibly what it is said to be, and is more probably as near that as anything local enterprise could furnish. He visits the very cell in which Tasso was confined, and has the satisfaction of knowing that it was the charcoal cellar of the hospital in which the poet dwelt. And the *genius loci*—where is that? Away in the American woods, very likely, whispering some dreamy, credulous youth,—telling him charming fables of its *locus*, and proposing to itself to abandon him as soon as he sets foot upon its native ground. You see, though I cared little about Tasso, and nothing about his prison, I was heavily disappointed in not being able to believe in it, and felt somehow that I had been awakened from a cherished dream.

II.

BUT I have no right to cast the unbroken shadow of my scepticism upon the reader, and so I tell him a story about Ferrara which I actually believe. He must know that in Ferrara the streets are marvellous long and straight. On the corners formed by the crossing of two of the longest and straightest of these streets stand four

palaces, in only one of which we have a present interest. This palace my guide took me to see, after our visit to Tasso's prison, and, standing in its shadow, he related to me the occurrence which has given it a sad celebrity. It was, in the time of the gifted toxicologist, the residence of Lucrezia Borgia, who used to make poisonous little suppers there, and ask the best families of Italy to partake of them. It happened on one occasion that Lucrezia Borgia was thrust out of a ball-room at Venice as a disreputable character, and treated with peculiar indignity. She determined to make the Venetians repent their unwonted accession of virtue, and she therefore allowed the occurrence to be forgotten till the proper moment of her revenge arrived, when she gave a supper, and invited to her board eighteen young and handsome Venetian nobles. Upon the preparation of this repast she bestowed all the resources of her skilful and exquisite knowledge ; and the result was, the Venetians were so felicitously poisoned that they had just time to listen to a speech from the charming and ingenious lady of the house before expiring. In this address she reminded her guests of the occurrence in the Venetian ball-room, and perhaps exulted a

little tediously in her present vengeance. She was surprised and pained when one of the guests interrupted her, and, justifying the treatment she had received at Venice, declared himself her natural son. The lady instantly recognised him, and in the sudden revulsion of maternal feeling, begged him to take an antidote. This he not only refused to do, but continued his dying reproaches, till his mother, losing her self-command, drew her poniard and plunged it into his heart.

The blood of her son fell upon the table-cloth, and this being hung out of the window to dry, the wall received a stain, which neither the sun nor rain of centuries sufficed to efface, and which was only removed with the masonry, when it became necessary to restore the wall under the window, a few months before the time of my visit to Ferrara. Accordingly the blood-stain has now disappeared ; but the conscientious artist who painted the new wall has faithfully restored the tragic spot, by bestowing upon the stucco a bloody dash of Venetian red.'

III.

It would be pleasant and merciful, I think, if old towns, after having served a

certain number of centuries for the use and pride of men, could be released to a gentle, unmolested decay. I, for my part, would like to have the ducal cities of North Italy, such as Mantua, Modena, Parma, and Ferrara, locked up quietly within their walls, and left to crumble and totter and fall, without any harder presence to vex them in their decrepitude than that of some grey custodian, who should come to the gate with clanking keys, and admit the wandering stranger if he gave signs of a reverent sympathy, to look for a little while upon the reserved and dignified desolation. It is a shame to tempt these sad old cities into unnatural activity, when they long ago made their peace with the world, and would fain be mixing their weary brick and mortar with the earth's unbuilded dust ; and it is hard for the emotional traveller to restrain his sense of outrage at finding them inhabited, and their rest broken by sounds of toil, traffic, and idleness ; at seeing places that would gladly have had done with history still doomed to be parts of political systems, to read the newspapers, and to expose railway guides and caricatures of the Pope and of Napoleon in their shop windows.

Of course, Ferrara was not incorporated into a living nation against her will, and I

therefore marvelled the more that she had become a portion of the present kingdom of Italy. The poor little state had its day long before ours ; it had been a republic, and then subject to lords ; and then, its lords becoming dukes, it had led a life of gaiety and glory till its fall, and given the world such names and memories as had fairly won it the right to rest for ever from making history. Its individual existence ended with that of Alfonso II., in 1597, when the Pope declared it reverted to the Holy See ; and I always fancied that it must have received with a spectral, yet courtly, kind of surprise, those rights of man which bloody-handed France distributed to the Italian cities in 1796 ; that it must have experienced a ghostly bewilderment in its rapid transformation, thereafter, under Napoleon, into part of the Cispadan Republic, the Cisalpine Republic, the Italian Republic, and the Kingdom of Italy, and that it must have sunk back again under the rule of the Popes with gratitude and relief at last—as phantoms are reputed to be glad when released from haunting the world where they once dwelt. I speak of all this, not so much from actual knowledge of facts as from personal feeling ; for it seems to me that if I were a city of the past, and must be

inhabited at all, I should choose just such priestly domination, assured that though it consumed my substance, yet it would be well for my fame and final repose. I should like to feel that my old churches were safe from demolition ; that my old convents and monasteries should always shelter the pious indolence of friars and nuns. It would be pleasant to have studious monks exploring quaint corners of my unphilosophised annals, and gentle, snuff-taking abbés writing up episodes in the history of my noble families, and dedicating them to the present heirs of past renown ; while the thinker and the reviewer should never penetrate my archives. Being myself done with war, I should be glad to have my people exempt, as they are under the Pope, from military service ; and I should hope that if the legates taxed them, the taxes paid would be as so many masses said to get my soul out of the purgatory of perished capitals. Finally, I should trust that in the sanctified keeping of the legates my mortal part would rest as sweetly as bones laid in hallowed earth brought from Jerusalem ; and that under their serene protection I should be for ever secure from being in any way exhumed and utilised by the ruthless hand of Progress.

However, as I said, this is a mere personal

preference, and other old cities might feel differently. Indeed, though disposed to condole with Ferrara upon the fact of her having become part of modern Italy, I could not deny, on better acquaintance with her, that she was still almost entirely of the past. She has certainly missed that ideal perfection of non-existence under the Popes which I have just depicted, but she is practically almost as profoundly at rest under the King of Italy. One may walk long through the longitude and rectitude of many of her streets without the encounter of a single face : the place, as a whole, is by no means as lively as Pompeii, where there are always strangers ; perhaps the only cities in the world worthy to compete with Ferrara in point of agreeable solitude are Mantua and Herculaneum. It is the newer part of the town—the modern quarter built before Boston was settled or Ohio was known—which is loneliest ; and whatever motion and cheerfulness are still felt in Ferrara linger fondly about the ancient holds of life—about the street before the castle of the Dukes, and in the elder and narrower streets branching away from the piazza of the Duomo, where, on market days, there is a kind of dreamy tumult. In the Ghetto we were almost crowded, and

people wanted to sell us things, with an enterprise that contrasted strangely with shop-keeping apathy elsewhere. Indeed, surprise at the presence of strangers spending two days in Ferrara, when they could have got away sooner, was the only emotion which the whole population agreed in expressing with any degree of energy, but into this they seemed to throw their whole vitality. The Italians are everywhere an artless race, so far as concerns the gratification of their curiosity, from which no consideration of decency deters them. Here in Ferrara they turned about and followed us with their eyes, came to windows to see us, lay in wait for us at street corners, and openly and audibly debated whether we were English or German. We might have thought this interest a tribute to something peculiar in our dress or manner, had it not visibly attended other strangers who arrived with us. It rose almost into a frenzy of craving to know more of us all, when, on the third day, the whole city assembled before our hotel, and witnessed, with a sort of desperate cry, the departure of the heavy-laden omnibus which bore us and our luggage from their midst.

IV.

I DOUBT if, after St. Mark's in Venice, the Duomo at Parma, and the Four Fabrics at Pisa, there is a church more worthy to be seen for its quaint, rich architecture, than the Cathedral at Ferrara. It is of that beloved Gothic, of which eye or soul cannot weary, and we continually wandered back to it from other more properly interesting objects. It is horribly restored in-doors, and its Renaissance splendours soon drove us forth, after we had looked at the Last Judgment by Bastianino. The style of this painting is muscular and Michelangelic, and the artist's notion of putting his friends in heaven and his foes in hell is by no means novel; but he has achieved fame for his picture by the original thought of making it his revenge for a disappointment in love. The unhappy lady who refused his love is represented in the depths, in the attitude of supplicating the pity and interest of another maiden in Paradise who accepted Bastianino, and who consequently has no mercy on her that snubbed him. But I counted of far more value than this fresco the sincere old sculptures on the façade of the cathedral, in

which the same subject is treated, beginning from the moment the archangel's trump has sounded. The people getting suddenly out of their graves at the summons are all admirable, but the best among them is the excellent man with one leg over the side of his coffin, tugging with both hands to pull himself up, while the coffin-lid tumbles off behind. One sees instantly that the conscience of this early riser is clean, for he makes no miserable attempt to turn over for a nap of a few thousand years more, with the pretence that it was ^{not} the trump of doom, but some other and unimportant noise he had heard. The final reward of the blessed is expressed by the repose of one small figure in the lap of a colossal effigy, which I understood to mean rest in Abraham's bosom ; but the artist has bestowed far more interest and feeling upon the fate of the damned, who are all boiling in rows of immense pots. It is doubtful, considering the droll aspect of heavenly bliss (as figured in the one small saint and the large patriarch), whether the artist intended the condition of his sinners to be so horribly comic as it is ; but the effect is just as great, for all that, and the slowest conscience might well take alarm from the spectacle of fate so grotesque and ludicrous ; for, wit-

tingly or unwittingly, the artist here punishes, as Dante knew best how to do, the folly of sinners as well as their wickedness. Boiling is bad enough ; but to be boiled in an undeniable dinner-pot, like a leg of mutton, is to suffer shame as well as agony.

We turned from these horrors, and walked down by the side of the Duomo toward the Ghetto, which is not so foul as one could wish a Ghetto to be. The Jews were admitted to Ferrara in 1275, and, throughout the government of the dukes, were free to live where they chose in the city ; but the Pope's legate assigned them afterward a separate quarter, which was closed with gates. Large numbers of Spanish Jews fled hither during the persecutions, and there are four synagogues for the four languages, — Spanish, German, French, and Italian. Avventi mentions, among other interesting facts concerning the Ferrarese Jews, that one of their rabbins, Isaaco degli Abranelli, a man of excellent learning in the Scriptures, claimed to be descended from David. His children still abide in Ferrara ; and it may have been one of his kingly line that kept the tempting antiquarian's shop on the corner from which you turn up toward the Library. I should think such a man would

find a sort of melancholy solace in such a place ; filled with broken and fragmentary glories of every kind, it would serve him for that chamber of desolation, set apart in the houses of the Oriental Hebrews as a place to bewail themselves in ; and, indeed, this idea may go far to explain the universal Israelitish fondness for dealing in relics and ruins.

v.

THE Ghetto was in itself indifferent to us ; it was merely our way to the Library, whither the great memory of Ariosto invited us to see his famous relics treasured there.

We found that the dead *literati* of Ferrara had the place wholly to themselves ; not a living soul disputed the solitude of the halls with the custodians, and the bust of Ariosto looked down from his monument upon rows of empty tables, idle chairs, and dusty ink-stands.

The poet, who was painted by Titian, has a tomb of abandoned ugliness, and sleeps under three epitaphs ; while cherubs frescoed on the wall behind affect to disclose the mausoleum, by lifting a frescoed curtain, but deceive no one who cares to consider how impossible it would be for them to perform this service, and caper so ignobly as they do

at the same time. In fact, this tomb of Ariosto shocks with its hideousness and levity. It stood formerly in the Church of San Benedetto, where it was erected shortly after the poet's death, and it was brought to the Library by the French, when they turned the church into a barracks for their troops. The poet's dust, therefore, rests here, where the worm, working silently through the vellum volumes on the shelves, feeds upon the immortality of many other poets. In the adjoining hall are the famed and precious manuscripts of Ariosto and of Tasso. A special application must be made to the librarian, in order to see the fragment of the *Furioso* in Ariosto's hand, and the manuscript copy of the *Gerusalemma*, with the corrections by Tasso. There are some pages of Ariosto's *Satires* framed and glazed for the satisfaction of the less curious ; as well as a letter of Tasso's, written from the Hospital of St. Anna, which the poet sends to a friend, with twelve shirts, and in which he begs that his friend will have the shirts mended, and cautions him "not to let them be mixed with others." But when the slow custodian had at last unlocked that more costly fragment of the *Furioso*, and placed it in my hands, the

other manuscripts had no value for me. It seems to me that the one privilege which travel has reserved to itself, is that of making each traveller, in presence of its treasures, forget whatever other travellers have said or written about them. I had read so much of Ariosto's industry, and of the proof of it in this manuscript, that I doubted if I should at last marvel at it. But the wonder remains with the relic, and I paid it my homage devoutly and humbly, and was disconcerted afterward to read again in my Valery how sensibly all others had felt the preciousness of that famous page, which, filled with half a score of previous failures, contains, in a little open space near the margin, the poet's final triumph in a clearly written stanza. Scarcely less touching and interesting than Ariosto's painful work on these yellow leaves, is the grand and simple tribute which another Italian poet was allowed to inscribe on one of them: "Vittorio Alfieri beheld and venerated;" and I think, counting over the many memorable things I saw on the road to Rome and the way home again, this manuscript was the noblest thing and best worthy to be remembered.

When at last I turned from it, however,

I saw that the custodian had another relic of Messer Lodovico, which he was not ashamed to match with the manuscript in my interest. This was the bone of one of the poet's fingers, which the pious care of Ferrara had picked up from his dust (when it was removed from the church to the Library), and neatly bottled and labelled. In like manner, they keep a great deal of sanctity in bottles with the bones of saints in Italy ; but I found very little savour of poesy hanging about this literary relic.

As if the melancholy fragment of mortality had marshalled us the way, we went from the Library to the house of Ariosto, which stands at the end of a long, long street, not far from the railway station. There was not a Christian soul, not a boy, not a cat, nor a dog to be seen in all that long street, at high noon, as we looked down its narrowing perspective, and if the poet and his friends have ever a mind for a posthumous meeting in his little reddish brick house, there is nothing to prevent their assembly, in broad daylight, from any part of the neighbourhood. There was no presence, however, more spiritual than a comely country girl to respond to our summons at the door, and nothing but a tub of corn-meal disputed our passage inside. Directly I found the house

inhabited by living people, I began to be sorry that it was not as empty as the Library and the street. Indeed, it is much better with Petrarch's house at Arquà, where the grandeur of the past is never molested by the small household joys and troubles of the present. That house is vacant, and no eyes less tender and fond than the poet's visitors may look down from its windows over the slope of vines and olives which it crowns ; and it seemed hard, here in Ferrara, where the houses are so many and the people are so few, that Ariosto's house could not be left to him. “*Parva sed apta miki*,” he has contentedly written upon the front ; but I doubt if he finds it large enough for another family, though his modern housekeeper reserves him certain rooms for visitors. To gain these, you go up to the second story—there are but two floors—and cross to the rear of the building, where Ariosto's chamber opens out of an anteroom, and looks down upon a pinched and faded bit of garden.¹ In this chamber they say

¹ In this garden the poet spent much of his time—chiefly in plucking up and transplanting the unlucky shrubbery, which was never suffered to grow three months in the same place,—such was the poet's rage for revision. It was probably never a very large or splendid garden, for the reason that Ariosto gave when

the poet died. It is oblong, and not large. I should think the windows and roof were of the poet's time, and that everything else had been restored ; I am quite sure the chairs and inkstand are kindly-meant inventions : for the poet's burly great arm-chair and graceful inkstand are both preserved in the Library. But the house is otherwise decent and probable ; and I do not question but it was in the hall where we encountered the meal-tub that the poet kept a copy of his *Furioso*, subject to corrections and advice of his visitors.

The ancestral house of the Ariosti has been within a few years restored out of all memory and semblance of itself ; and my wish to see the place in which the poet was born and spent his childhood resulted, after infinite search, in finding a building faced newly with stucco and newly French-windowed.

Our *portier* said it was the work of the late English Vice-Consul, who had bought the house. When I complained of the sacri-

reproached that he who knew so well how to describe magnificent palaces should have built such a poor little house : "It was easier to make verses than houses, and the fine palaces in his poem cost him no money."

lege, he said : “ Yes, it is true. But then, you must know, the Ariosti were not one of the noble families of Ferrara.”

VI.

THE castle of the Dukes of Ferrara, about which cluster so many sad and splendid memories, stands in the heart of the city. I think that the moonlight which, on the night of arrival, showed me its massive walls rising from the shadowy moat that surrounds them, and its four great towers, heavily buttressed, and expanding at the top into bulging cornices of cavernous brick-work, could have fallen on nothing else in all Italy so picturesque, and so full of the proper dread charm of feudal times, as this pile of gloomy and majestic strength. The daylight took nothing of this charm from it ; for the castle stands isolated in the midst of the city, as its founder meant that it should,¹ and modern civilisation has not

¹ The castle of Ferrara was begun in 1385 by Niccolò d'Este, to defend himself against the repetition of scenes of tumult, in which his princely rights were invaded. One of his tax-gatherers, Tommaso da Tortona, had, a short time before, made himself so obnoxious to the people by his insolence and severity, that they rose against him and demanded his life. He

crossed the castle moat, to undignify its exterior with any visible touch of the present. To be sure, when you enter it, the magnificent life is gone out of the old edifice ; it is no stately halberdier who stands on guard at the gate of the drawbridge, but a stumpy Italian soldier in baggy trousers. The castle is full of public offices, and one sees in its courts and on its stairways, not brilliant men-at-arms, nor gay squires and pages, but whistling messengers going from one office to another with docketed papers, and slip-shod serving-men carrying the clerks their coffee in very dirty little pots. Dreary-looking suitors, slowly grinding through the mills of law, or passing in the routine of the offices, are the guests encountered in the corridors ; and all that bright-coloured throng of the old days, ladies and lords, is

took refuge in the palace of his master, which was immediately assailed. The prince's own life was threatened, and he was forced to surrender the fugitive to the people, who tore Tortona limb from limb, and then, after parading the city with the mutilated remains, quietly returned to their allegiance. Niccolò, therefore, caused this castle to be built, which he strengthened with massive walls and towers commanding the whole city, and rendered inaccessible by surrounding it with a deep and wide canal from the river Reno.

passed from the scene. The melodrama is over, friends, and now we have a play of real life, founded on fact and inculcating a moral.

Of course the custodians were slow to admit any change of this kind. If you could have believed them,—and the poor people told as many lies as they could to make you,—you would believe that nothing had ever happened of a commonplace nature in this castle. The taking-off of Hugo and Parisina they think the great merit of the castle; and one of them, seeing us, made haste to light his taper and conduct us down to the dungeons where those unhappy lovers were imprisoned. It is the misfortune of memorable dungeons to acquire, when put upon show, just the reverse of those properties which should raise horror and distress in the mind of the beholder. It was impossible to deny that the cells of Parisina and of Hugo were both singularly warm, dry, and comfortable; and we, who had never been imprisoned in them, found it hard to command, for our sensation, the terror and agony of the miserable ones who suffered there. We, happy and secure in these dungeons, could not think of the guilty and wretched pair bowing themselves to the headsman's stroke in the gloomy

chamber under the Hall of Aurora ; nor of the Marquis, in his night-long walk, breaking at last into frantic remorse and tears to know that his will had been accomplished. Nay, there upon its very scene, the whole tragedy faded from us ; and, seeing our wonder so cold, the custodian tried to kindle it by saying that in the time of the event these cells were much dreadfuller than now, which was no doubt true. The floors of the dungeons are both below the level of the moat, and the narrow windows, or rather crevices to admit the light, were cut in the prodigiously thick wall just above the water, and were defended with four successive iron gratings. The dungeons are some distance apart: that of Hugo was separated from the outer wall of the castle by a narrow passage-way, while Parisina's window opened directly upon the moat.

When we ascended again to the court of the castle, the custodian, abetted by his wife, would have interested us in two memorable wells there, between which, he said, Hugo was beheaded ; and, unabashed by the small success of this fable, he pointed out two windows, in converging angles overhead, from one of which the Marquis, looking into the other, discovered the guilt of the

lovers. The windows are now walled up, but are neatly represented to the credulous eye by a fresco of lattices.

Valery mentions another claim upon the interest of the tourist which this castle may make, in the fact that it once sheltered John Calvin, who was protected by the Marchioness Renée, wife of Hercules II.; and my *Servitore di Piazza* (the one who knows how to read and write) gives the following account of the matter, in speaking of the domestic chapel which Renée had built in the castle: "This lady was learned in *belles-lettres* and in the schismatic doctrines which at that time were insinuating themselves throughout France and Germany, and with which Calvin, Luther, and other proselytes, agitated the people, and threatened war to the Catholic religion. Nationally fond of innovation, and averse to the court of Rome on account of the dissensions between her father and Pope Julius II., Renée began to receive the teachings of Calvin, with whom she maintained correspondence. Indeed, Calvin himself, under the name of Huppeville, visited her in Ferrara, in 1536, and ended by corrupting her mind and seducing her into his own errors, which produced discord between her and

her religious husband, and resulted in his placing her in temporary seclusion, in order to attempt her conversion. Hence, the chapel is faced with marble, panelled in relief, and studied to avoid giving place to saints or images, which were disapproved by the almost Anabaptist doctrines of Calvin, then fatally imbibed by the princess."

We would willingly, as Protestants, have visited this wicked chapel; but we were prevented from seeing it, as well as the famous frescoes of Dosso Dossi in the Hall of Aurora, by the fact that the prefect was giving a little dinner (*pranzetto*) in that part of the castle. We were not so greatly disappointed in reality as we made believe; but our *Servitore di piazza* (the unlettered one) was almost moved to *lesa maestà* with vexation. He had been full of scorching patriotism the whole morning; but now, electing the unhappy and apologetic custodian representative of Piedmontese tyranny, he bitterly assailed the government of the king. In the times of his Holiness the legates had made it their pleasure and duty to show the whole castle to strangers. But now strangers must be sent away without seeing its chief beauties, because, forsooth, the prefect was giving a little dinner. Presence of the Devil!

VII.

In our visits to the different churches in Ferrara we noticed devotion in classes of people who are devout nowhere else in Italy. Not only came solid-looking business men to say their prayers, but gay young dandies, who knelt and repeated their orisons, and then rose and went seriously out. In Venice they would have posted themselves against a pillar, sucked the heads of their sticks, and made eyes at the young ladies kneeling near them. This degree of religion was all the more remarkable in Ferrara, because that city had been so many years under the Pope, and his Holiness contrives commonly to prevent the appearance of religion in young men throughout his dominions.

Valery speaks of the delightful society which he met in the grey old town ; and it is said that Ferrara has an unusual share of culture in her wealthy class, which is large. With such memories of learning and literary splendour as belong to her, it would be strange if she did not in some form keep alive the sacred flame. But, though there may be refinement and erudition in Ferrara, she has given no great name to modern Italian

literature. Her men of letters seem to be of that race of grubs singularly abundant in Italy,—men who dig out of archives and libraries some topic of special and momentary interest and print it, unstudied and unphilosophised. Their books are material, not literature, and it is marvellous how many of them are published. A writer on any given subject can heap together from them a mass of fact and anecdote invaluable in its way ; but it is a mass without life or light, and it must be vivified by him who uses it before it can serve the world, which does not care for its dead local value. It remains to be seen whether the free speech and free press of Italy can reawaken the intellectual activity of the cities which once gave the land so many literary capitals.

What numbers of people used to write verses in Ferrara ! By operation of the principle which causes things concerning whatever subject you happen to be interested in to turn up in every direction, I found a volume of these dead-and-gone immortals at a book-stall, one day in Venice. It is a curiously yellow and uncomfortable volume of the year 1703, printed all in italics. I suppose there are two hundred odd rhymers selected from in that book,—

and how droll the most of them are, with their unmistakable traces of descent from Ariosto, Tasso, and Guarini ! What acres of enamelled meadow there are in those pages ! Brooks enough to turn all the mills in the world go purling through them. I should say some thousands of nymphs are constantly engaged in weaving garlands there, and the swains keep such a piping on those familiar notes,—*Amore, dolore, crudele, and miele*. Poor little poets ! they knew no other tunes. Do not now weak voices twitter from a hundred books, in unconscious imitation of the hour's great singers ?

VIII.

I THINK some of the pleasantest people in Italy are the army gentlemen. There is the race's gentleness in their ways, in spite of their ferocious trade, and an American freedom of style. They brag in a manner that makes one feel at home immediately ; and, met in travel, they are ready to render any little kindness.

The other year at Reggio (which is not far from Modena) we stopped to dine at a restaurant where the whole garrison had its coat off and was playing billiards, with the

exception of one or two officers, who were dining. These rose and bowed as we entered their room, and when the waiter pretended that such and such dishes were out (in Italy the waiter, for some mysterious reason, always pretends that the best dishes are out), they bullied him for the honour of Italy, and made him bring them to us. Indeed, I am afraid his life was sadly harassed by those brave men. We were in deep despair at finding no French bread, and the waiter swore with the utmost pathos that there was none; but as soon as his back was turned, a tightly laced little captain rose and began to forage for the bread. He opened every drawer and cupboard in the room, and, finding none, invaded another room, captured several loaves from the plates laid there, and brought them back in triumph, presenting them to us amid the applause of his comrades. The dismay of the waiter, on his return, was ineffable.

Three officers, who dined with us at the *table d'hôte* of the Stella d'Oro in Ferrara (and excellent dinners were those we ate there), were visibly anxious to address us, and began, not uncivilly, but still in order that we should hear, to speculate on our nationality among themselves. It appeared

that we were Germans ; for one of these officers, who had formerly been in the Austrian service at Vienna, recognised the word *bitter* in our remarks on the *beccafichi*. As I did not care to put these fine fellows to the trouble of hating us for others' faults, I made bold to say that we were not Germans, and to add that *bitter* was also an English word. Ah ! yes, to be sure, one of them admitted ; when he was with the Sardinian army in the Crimea, he had frequently heard the word used by the English soldiers. He nodded confirmation of what he said to his comrades ; and then was good enough to display what English he knew. It was barely sufficient to impress his comrades ; but it led the way to a good deal of talk in Italian.

"I suppose you gentlemen are all Piedmontese ?" I said.

"Not at all," said our Crimean. "I am from Como ; this gentleman, il signor Conte (il signor Conte bowed), is of Piacenza ; and our friend across the table is Genoese. The army is doing a great deal to unify Italy. We are all Italians now, and you see we speak Italian, and not our dialects, together."

My cheap remark that it was a fine thing

to see them all united under one flag, after so many ages of mutual hate and bloodshed, turned the talk upon the origin of the Italian flag ; and that led our Crimean to ask what was the origin of the English colours.

“ I scarcely know,” I said. “ We are Americans.”

Our friends at once grew more cordial. “ Oh, Americani ! ” They had great pleasure of it. Did we think Signor Leencolen would be re-elected ?

I supposed that he had been elected that day, I said.

Ah ! this was the election day, then. *Cospetto !*

At this the Genoese frowned superior intelligence, and the Crimean, gazing admiringly upon him, said he had been nine months at Nuova York, and that he had a brother living there. The poor Crimean boastfully added that he had a cousin in America, and that Americans generally spoke Spanish. The count from Piacenza wore an air of pathetic discomfiture, and tried to invent a transatlantic relative, as I think, but failed.

I am persuaded that none of these warriors really had kinsmen in America, but that they all pretended to have them, out of politeness to us, and that they believed each other.

It was very kind of them, and we were so grateful that we put no embarrassing questions. Indeed, the conversation presently took another course, and grew to include the whole table.

There was an extremely pretty Italian present with her newly wedded husband, who turned out to be a retired officer. He fraternised at once with our soldiers, and when we left the table they all rose and made military obeisances. Having asked leave to light their cigars, they were smoking—the sweet young bride blowing a fairy cloud from her rosy lips with the rest. “Indeed,” I heard an Italian lady once remark, “why should men pretend to deny us the privilege of smoking, it is so pleasant and innocent?” It is but just to the Italians to say that they do not always deny it; and there is, without doubt, a certain grace and charm in a pretty *fumatrice*. I suppose it is a habit not so pleasing in an ugly or middle-aged woman.

IV.

THROUGH BOLOGNA TO GENOA.

I.

WE had intended to stay only one day at Ferrara, but just at that time the storms predicted on the Adriatic and Mediterranean coasts, by Mathieu de la Drome, had been raging all over Italy, and the railway communications were broken in every direction. The magnificent work through and under the Apennines, between Bologna and Florence, had been washed away by the mountain torrents in a dozen places, and the roads over the plains of the Romagna had been sapped by the flood, and rendered useless where not actually laid under water.

On the day of our intended departure we left the hotel, with other travellers, gaily incredulous of the landlord's fear that no train would start for Bologna. At the station we found a crowd of people waiting and hoping, but there was a sickly cast of doubt in some faces, and the labelled employés of the railway wore looks of ominous

importance. Of course the crowd did not lose its temper. It sought information of the officials running to and fro with telegrams, in a spirit of national sweetness, and consoled itself with saying, as Italy has said under all circumstances of difficulty for centuries : *Ci vuol pazienza!* At last a blank silence fell upon it, as the *Capo-Stazione* advanced toward a well-dressed man in the crowd, and spoke to him quietly. The well-dressed man lifted his forefinger and waved it back and forth before his face :—

The Well-dressed Man—Dunque, non si parte più? (No departures, then?)

The Capo-Stazione (waving *his* forefinger in like manner)—Non si parte più. (Like a mournful echo.)

We knew quite as well from this pantomime of negation as from the dialogue our sad fate, and submitted to it. Some adventurous spirit demanded whether any trains would go on the morrow. The *Capo-Stazione*, with an air of one who would not presume to fathom the designs of Providence, responded : “ Who knows ? To-day, certainly not. To-morrow, perhaps. But ”— and vanished.

It may give an idea of the Italian way of doing things to say that, as we understood,

this break in the line was only a few miles in extent, that trains could have approached both to and from Bologna, and that a little enterprise on the part of the company could have passed travellers from one side to the other with very small trouble or delay. But the railway company was as much daunted by the inundation as a peasant going to market, and for two months after the accident no trains carried passengers from one city to the other. No doubt, however, the line was under process of very solid repair meanwhile.

For the present the only means of getting to Bologna was by carriage on the old highway, and accordingly we took passage thither in the omnibus of the *Stella d'Oro*.

There was little to interest us in the country over which we rode. It is perfectly flat, and I suppose the reader knows what quantities of hemp and flax are raised there. The land seems poorer than in Lombardy, and the farm-houses and peasants' cottages are small and mean, though the peasants themselves, when we met them, looked well fed, and were certainly well clad. The landscape lay soaking in a dreary drizzle the whole way, and the town of Cento, when we reached it, seemed miserably conscious of being too wet and dirty to go indoors, and

was loitering about in the rain. Our arrival gave the poor little place a sensation, for I think such a thing as an omnibus had not been seen there since the railway of Bologna and Ferrara was built. We went into the principal caffè to lunch—a caffè much too large for Cento, with immense red-leather cushioned sofas, and a cold, forlorn air of half-starved gentility, a clean, high-roofed caffè and a breezy,—and thither the youthful nobility and gentry of the place followed us, and ordered a cup of coffee, that they might sit down and give us the pleasure of their distinguished company. They put on their very finest manners, and took their most captivating attitudes for the ladies' sake ; and the gentlemen of our party fancied that it was for them these young men began to discuss the Roman question. How loud they were, and how earnest ! And how often they consulted the newspapers of the caffè ! (Older newspapers I never saw off a canal boat.) I may tire some time of the artless vanity of the young Italians, so innocent, so amiable, so transparent, but I think I never shall.

The great painter Guercino was born at Cento, and they have a noble and beautiful statue of him in the piazza, which the town

caused to be erected from contributions by all the citizens. Formerly his house was kept for a show to the public ; it was full of the pictures of the painter and many mementoes of him ; but recently the paintings have been taken to the gallery, and the house is now closed. The gallery is, consequently, one of the richest second-rate galleries in Italy, and one may spend much longer time in it than we gave, with great profit. There are some most interesting heads of Christ, painted, as Guercino always painted the Saviour, with a great degree of humanity in the face. It is an excellent countenance, and full of sweet dignity, but quite different from the conventional face of Christ.

II.

AT night we were again in Bologna, of which we had not seen the gloomy arcades for two years. It must be a dreary town at all times : in a rain it is horrible ; and I think the whole race of arcaded cities, Treviso, Padua, and Bologna, are dull, blind, and comfortless. The effect of the buildings vaulted above the side-walks is that of a continuous cellar-way ; your view of the street is constantly interrupted by the heavy

brick pillars that support the arches ; the arcades are not even picturesque. Liking always to leave Bologna as quickly as possible, and, on this occasion, learning that there was no hope of crossing the Apennines to Florence, we made haste to take the first train for Genoa, meaning to proceed thence directly to Naples by steamer.

It was a motley company that sat down in Hotel Brun the morning after our arrival in Bologna to a breakfast of murky coffee and fury beefsteaks, associated with sleek, greasy, lukewarm fried potatoes. I am sure that if each of our weather-bound pilgrims had told his story, we had been as well entertained as those at Canterbury. However, no one thought fit to give his narrative but a garrulous old Hebrew from London, who told us how he had been made to pay fifteen guineas for a carriage to cross the Apennines, and had been obliged to walk part of the way at that price. He was evidently proud, now the money was gone, of having been cheated of so much ; and in him we saw that there was at least one human being more odious than a purse-proud Englishman —namely, a purse-proud English Jew. He gave his noble name after a while as something too precious to be kept from the com-

pany, when recommending one of the travellers to go to the Hotel d'Angleterre in Rome : "The best 'otel out of England. You may mention my name, if you like—Mr Jonas." The recipient of this favour noted down the talismanic words in his pocket-book, and Mr. Jonas, conscious of having conferred a benefit on his race, became more odious to it than ever. An Englishman is of a composition so uncomfortably original that no one can copy him, though many may caricature. I saw an American in London once who thought himself an Englishman because he wore leg-of-mutton whiskers, declaimed against universal suffrage and republics, and had an appetite for high game. He was a hateful animal, surely, but he was not the British Lion ; and this poor Hebrew at Bologna was not a whit more successful in his imitation of the illustrious brute, though he talked, like him, of nothing but hotels, and routes of travel, and hackmen and porters, and seemed to have nothing to do in Italy but to get through it as quickly and abusively as possible.

We were very glad, I say, to part from all this at Bologna, and take the noon train for Genoa. In our car there were none but Italians, and the exchange of *La Persever-*

anza of Milan for *Il Popolo* of Turin with one of them quickly opened the way for conversation and acquaintance. (*En passant*: I know of no journal in the United States whose articles are better than those of the *Perseveranza*, and it was gratifying to an American to read in this ablest journal of Italy nothing but applause and encouragement of the national side in our late war.) My new-made friend turned out to be a Milanese. He was a physician, and had served as a surgeon in the late war of Italian independence ; but was now placed in a hospital in Milan. There was a gentle little blonde with him, and at Piacenza, where we stopped for lunch, " You see," said he, indicating the lady, " we are newly married " —which was, indeed, plain enough to any one who looked at their joyous faces, and observed how great disposition that little blonde had to nestle on that young man's broad shoulder. " I have a week's leave from my place," he went on, " and this is our wedding journey. We were to have gone to Florence, but it seems we are fated not to see that famous city."

He spoke of it as immensely far off, and herein greatly amused us Americans, who had outgrown distances.

"So we are going to Genoa instead, for two or three days." "Oh, have you ever been at Genoa?" broke in the bride. "What magnificent palaces! And then the bay, and the villas in the environs! There is the Villa Pallavicini, with beautiful gardens, where an artificial shower breaks out from the bushes, and sprinkles the people who pass. Such fun!" and she continued to describe vividly a city of which she had only heard from her husband; and it was easy to see that she walked in paradise wherever he led her.

They say that Italian husbands and wives do not long remain fond of each other, but it was impossible in the presence of these happy people not to believe in the eternity of their love, and it was hard to keep from "dropping into poetry" on account of them. Their bliss infected everybody in the car, and in spite of the weariness of our journey, and the vexation of the misadventures which had succeeded one another unsparingly ever since we left home, we found ourselves far on the way to Genoa before we thought to grumble at the distance. There was with us, besides the bridal party, a lady travelling from Bologna to Turin, who had learned English in London, and spoke it much better

than most Londoners. It is surprising how thoroughly Italians master a language so alien to their own as ours, and how frequently you find them acquainted with English. From Russia the mania for this tongue has spread all over the Continent, and in Italy English seems to be prized first among the virtues.

As we drew near Genoa, the moon came out on purpose to show us the superb city, and we strove eagerly for a first glimpse of the proud capital where Columbus was born. To tell the truth, the glimpse was but slight and false, for railways always enter cities by some mean level, from which any picturesque view is impossible.

Near the station in Genoa, however, is the weak and ugly monument which the municipality has lately raised to Columbus. The moon made the best of this, which stands in a wide open space, and contrived, with an Italian skill in the arrangement of light, to produce an effect of undeniable splendour. On the morrow, we found out by the careless candour of the daylight what a uselessly big head Columbus had, and how the sculptor had not very happily thought proper to represent him with his sea-legs on.

V.

UP AND DOWN GENOA.

I HAD my notebook with me on this journey, and pledged myself to make notes in it. And, indeed, I did really do something of the kind, though the result of my labours is by no means so voluminous as I would like it to be, now when the work of wishing there were more notes is so easy. We spent but one day in Genoa, and I find such a marvellous succinct record of this in my book that I am tempted to give it here, after the fashion of that Historical Heavy-weight who writes the *Life of Frederick the Great*.

“ *Genoa, November 13.*—Breakfast *à la fourchette* excellently and cheaply. I buy a hat. We go to seek the Consul, and, after finding everything else for two hours, find him. Genoa is the most magnificent city I ever saw; and the new monument to Columbus about the weakest possible monument. Walk through the city with Consul; Doge’s palace; cathedral; girl turning somersaults in the street; blind madman on the cathe-

dral steps. We leave for Naples at twelve midnight."

As for the breakfast, it was eaten at one of the many good caffè in Genoa, and perhaps some statistician will like to know that for a beefsteak and potatoes, with a half-bottle of Ligurian wine, we paid a franc. For this money we had also the society of an unoccupied waiter, who leaned against a marble column and looked on, with that gentle, half-compassionate interest in our appetites which seems native to the tribe of waiters. A slight dash of surprise is in this professional manner; and there is a faint smile on the solemn, professional countenance, which is perhaps prompted by too intimate knowledge of the mysteries of the kitchen and the habits of the cook. The man who passes his life among beefsteaks cannot be expected to love them, or to regard without wonder the avidity with which others devour them. I imagine that service in restaurants must beget simple and natural tastes in eating, and that the jaded men who minister there to our pampered appetites demand only for themselves—

" A scrip with herbs and fruits supplied,
And water from the spring."

Turning from this thought to the purchase of my hat, I do not believe that literary art can interest the reader in that purely personal transaction, though I have no doubt that a great deal might be said about buying hats as a principle. I prefer, therefore, to pass to our search for the Consul.

A former Consul at —, whom I know, has told me a good many stories about the pieces of popular mind which he received at different times from the travelling public, in reproof of his difficulty of discovery ; and I think it must be one of the most jealously guarded rights of American citizens in foreign lands to declare the national representative hard to find, if there is no other complaint to lodge against him. It seems to be, in peculiar degree, a quality of consulship at —, to be found remote and inaccessible. My friend says that even at New York, before setting out for his post, when inquiring into the history of his predecessors, he heard that they were one and all hard to find ; and he relates that on the steamer, going over, there was a low fellow who set the table in a roar by a vulgar anecdote to this effect :—

“ There was once a Consul at —, who indicated his office-hours by the legend on his

door, 'In from ten to one.' An old ship-captain, who kept coming for about a week without finding the Consul, at last furiously wrote, in the terms of wager, under this legend, 'Ten to one you 're out !'"

My friend also states that one day a visitor of his remarked : "I 'm rather surprised to find you in. As a general rule, I never do find Consuls in." Habitually, his fellow-countrymen entertained him with accounts of their misadventures in reaching him. It was useless to represent to them that his house was in the most convenient locality in —, where, indeed, no stranger can walk twenty rods from his hotel without losing himself ; that their guide was an ass, or their courier a rogue. They listened to him politely, but they never pardoned him in the least ; and neither will I forgive the Consul at Genoa. I had no earthly consular business with him, but a private favour to ask. It was Sunday, and I could not reasonably expect to find him at his office, or anybody to tell me where he lived ; but I have seldom had so keen a sense of personal wrong and national neglect as in my search for that Consul's house.

In Italy there is no species of fact with which any human being you meet will not

pretend to have perfect acquaintance, and, of course, the driver whose fiacre we took professed himself a complete guide to the Consul's whereabouts, and took us successively to the residences of the Consuls of all the South American republics. It occurred to me that it might be well to inquire of these officials where their colleague was to be found ; but it is true that not one Consul of them was at home ! Their doors were opened by vacant old women, in whom a vague intelligence feebly guttered, like the wick of an expiring candle, and who, after feigning to throw floods of light on the object of my search, successively flickered out, and left me in total darkness.

Till that day, I never knew of what lofty flights stairs were capable. As out-of-doors, in Genoa, it is either all up or down hill, so indoors it is either all up or down stairs. Ascending and descending, in one palace after another, those infinite marble steps, it became a question, not solved to this hour, whether it was worse to ascend or descend, —each ordeal in its turn seemed so much more terrible than the other.

At last I resolved to come to an understanding with the driver, and I spent what little breath I had left—it was dry and hot

as the simoom—in blowing up that infamous man. “ You are a great driver,” I said, “ not to know your own city. What are you good for if you can’t take a foreigner to his Consul’s ? ” “ Signore,” answered the driver patiently, “ you would have to get a book in two volumes by heart in order to be able to find everybody in Genoa. This city is a labyrinth.”

Truly, it had so proved, and I could scarcely believe in my good luck when I actually found my friend, and set out with him on a ramble through its toils.

A very great number of the streets in Genoa are footways merely, and these are as narrow, as dark, as full of jutting chimney-places, balconies, and opened window-shutters, and as picturesque as the little alleys in Venice. They wander at will around the bases of the gloomy old stone palaces, and seem to have a vagabond fondness for creeping down to the port, and losing themselves there in a certain cavernous arcade which curves round the water with the flection of the shore, and makes itself a twilight at noonday. Under it are clangorous shops of iron-smiths, and sizzling shops of marine cooks, and, looking down its dim perspective, one beholds chiefly sea-legs

coming and going, more or less affected by strong waters ; and, as the faces to which these sea-legs belong draw near, one discerns sailors from all parts of the world,—tawny men from Sicily and Norway, as diverse in their tawniness as olive and train-oil ; sharp faces from Nantucket and from the Piræus, likewise mightily different in their sharpness ; blonde Germans and blonde Englishmen ; and now and then a coloured brother also in the seafaring line, with sea-legs also, more or less affected by strong waters like the rest.

What curious people are these seafarers ! They coast the whole world, and know nothing of it, being more ignorant and helpless than children on shore. I spoke with the Yankee mate of a ship one day at Venice, and asked him how he liked the city.

Well, he had not been ashore yet.

He was told he had better go ashore ; that the Piazza San Marco was worth seeing.

Well, he knew it ; he had seen pictures of it ; but he guessed he wouldn't go ashore.

Why not, now he was here ?

Well, he laid out to go ashore the next time he came to Venice.

And so, bless his honest soul, he lay three weeks at Venice with his ship, after a voyage of two months, and he sailed away without ever setting his foot on that enchanted ground.

I should have liked to stop some of those seafarers and ask them what they thought of Genoa.

It must have been in the little streets—impassable for horses—that the people sat and talked, as Heine fabled, in their doorways, and touched knees with the people sitting and talking on the thresholds of the opposite side. But we saw no gossipers there on our Sunday in Genoa ; and I think the domestic race of Heine's day no longer lives in Genoa, for everybody we saw on the streets was gaily dressed in the idea of the last fashions, and was to be met chiefly in the public promenades. The fashions were French ; but here still lingers the lovely phantom of the old national costume of Genoa, and snow-white veils fluttered from many a dark head, and caressed many an olive cheek. It is the kindest and charitablest of attirements, this white veil, and, while decking beauty to the most perilous effect, befriends and modifies age and ugliness.

The pleasure with which I look at the splendour of an Italian crowd in winter is always touched with melancholy. I know that, at the time of its noonday promenade, it has nothing but a cup of coffee in its stomach ; that it has emerged from a house as cold and dim as a cellar ; and that it will presently go home to dine on rice and boiled beef. I know that chilblains secretly gnaw the hands inside of its kid gloves, and I see in the rawness of its faces the anguish of winter-long suffering from cold. But I also look at many in this crowd with the eye of the economist, and wonder how people practising even so great self-denial as they can contrive to make so much display on their little means,—how those clerks of public offices, who have rarely an income of five hundred dollars a year, can dress with such peerless gorgeousness. I suppose the national instinct teaches them ways and means unknown to us. The passion for dress is universal : the men are as fond of it as the women ; and, happily, clothes are comparatively cheap. It is no great harm in itself, this display : it is only a pity that there is often nothing, or worse than nothing, under the shining surface.

We walked with the brilliant Genoese

crowd upon the hill where the public promenade overlooks a landscape of city and country, houses and gardens, vines and olives, which it makes the heart ache to behold, it is so faultlessly beautiful. Behind us the fountain was—

“ Shaking its loosened silver in the sun ;”

the birds were singing ; and there were innumerable fair girls going by, about whom one might have made romances if one had not known better. Our friend pointed out to us the “ pink jail ” in which Dickens lived while in Genoa ; and showed us on the brow of a distant upland the villa, called *Il Paradiso*, which Byron had occupied. I daresay this Genoese joke is already in print : That the Devil re-entered Paradise when Byron took this villa. Though, in loveliest Italy, one is half-persuaded that the Devil had never left Paradise.

After lingering a little longer on that delicious height, we turned and went down for a stroll through the city.

My notebook says that Genoa is the most magnificent city I ever saw, and I hold by my notebook, though I hardly know how to prove it. Venice is, and remains, the most beautiful city in the world ; but her

ancient rival impresses you with greater splendour. I suppose that the exclusively Renaissance architecture, which Ruskin declares the architecture of pride, lends itself powerfully to this effect in Genoa. It is here in its best mood, and there is little grotesque Renaissance to be seen, though the palaces are, as usual, loaded with ornament. The Via Nuova is the chief thoroughfare of the city, and the crowd pours through this avenue between long lines of palaces. Height on height rise the stately, sculptured façades, colonnaded, statued, pierced by mighty doorways and lofty windows, and the palaces seem to gain a kind of aristocratic *hauteur* from the fact that there are for the most part no side-walks, and that the carriages, rolling insolently through the crowd, threaten constantly to grind the pedestrian up against their carven marbles and immolate him to their stony pride. There is something gracious and gentle in the grandeur of Venice, and much that the heart loves to cling to; but in Genoa no sense of kindliness is touched by the magnificence of the city.

It was an unspeakable relief, after such a street, to come, on a sudden, upon the Duomo, one of the few Gothic buildings

in Genoa, and rest our jaded eyes on that architecture which Heaven seems truly to have put into the thoughts of man together with the Christian faith. O beloved beauty of aspiring arches, of slender and clustered columns, of flowering capitals and window traceries, of many-carven breadths and heights, wherein all Nature breathes and blossoms again ! There is neither Greek perfection, nor winning Byzantine languor, nor insolent Renaissance opulence, which may compare with this loveliness of yours ! Alas that the interior of this Gothic temple of Genoa should abound in the abomination of rococo restoration ! They say that the dust of St. John the Baptist lies there within a costly shrine ; and I wonder that it can sleep in peace amid all that heathenish show of bad taste. But the poor saints have to suffer a great deal in Italy.

Outside, on the piazza before the church, there was an idle, cruel crowd, amusing itself with the efforts of a blind old man to find the entrance. He had a number of books which he desperately laid down while he ran his helpless hands over the clustered columns, and which he then desperately caught up again, in fear of losing them. At other times he paused, and wildly clasped

his hands upon his eyes, or wildly threw up his arms ; and then began to run to and fro again uneasily, while the crowd laughed and jeered. Doubtless a taint of madness afflicted him ; but not the less he seemed the type of a blind soul that gropes darkly about through life, to find the doorway of some divine truth or beauty,—touched by the heavenly harmonies from within, and miserably failing, amid the scornful cries and bitter glee of those who have no will but to mock aspiration.

The girl turning somersaults in another place had far more popular sympathy than the blind madman at the temple door, but she was hardly a more cheerful spectacle. For all her festive spangles and fairy-like brevity of skirts, she had quite a work-a-day look upon her honest, blood-red face, as if this were business though it looked like sport, and her part of the diversion were as practical as that of the famous captain of the waiters, who gave the act of peeling a sack of potatoes a playful effect by standing on his head. The poor damsel was going over and over, to the sound of most dismal drumming and braying, in front of the immense old palace of the Genoese Doges,—a classic building stilted on a rustic base, and quite

worthy of Palladio, if anybody thinks that is praise.

There was little left of our day when we had dined ; but having seen the outside of Genoa, and not hoping to see the inside, we found even this little heavy on our hands, and were glad as the hour drew near when we were to take the steamer for Naples.

It had been one of the noisiest days spent during several years in clamorous Italy, whose voiceful uproar strikes to the summits of her guardian Alps, and greets the coming stranger, and whose loud *Addio* would stun him at parting, if he had not meanwhile become habituated to the operatic pitch of her everyday tones. In Genoa, the hotels, taking counsel of the vagabond streets, stand about the cavernous arcade already mentioned, and all the noise of the shipping reaches their guests. We rose early that Sunday morning to the sound of a fleet unloading cargoes of wrought-iron, and of the hard swearing of all nations of seafaring men. The whole day long the tumult followed us, and seemed to culminate at last in the screams of a parrot, who thought it fine to cry, “*Piove ! piove ! piove !*”—“It rains ! it rains ! it rains !”—and had, no doubt, a secret interest in some umbrella shop. This

unprincipled bird dwelt somewhere in the neighbourhood of the street where you see the awful tablet in the wall devoting to infamy the citizens of the old republic that were false to their country. The sight of that pitiless stone recalls with a thrill the picturesque, unhappy past, with all the wandering, half-benighted efforts of the people to rend their liberty from now a foreign and now a native lord. At best, they only knew how to avenge their wrongs ; but now, let us hope, they have learnt, with all Italy, to prevent them. The will was never wanting of old to the Ligurian race, and in this time they have done their full share to establish Italian freedom.

I do not know why it should have been so surprising to hear the boatman who rowed us to the steamer's anchorage speak English ; but, after his harsh Genoese profanity in getting his boat into open water, it was the last thing we expected from him. It had somehow the effect of a furious beast addressing you in your native tongue, and telling you it was "Wary poordy wedder ;" and it made us cling to his good-nature with the trembling solicitude of Little Red Riding-Hood, when she

begins to have the first faint suspicions of her grandmother. However, our boatman was no wild beast, but took our six cents of *buonamano* with the base servility of a Christian man, when he had put our luggage in the cabin of the steamer. I wonder how he should have known us for Americans? He did so know us, and said he had been at New York in better days, when he voyaged upon higher seas than those he now navigated.

On board, we watched with compassion an old gentleman in the cabin making a hearty meal of sardines and fruit-pie, and I asked him if he had ever been at sea. "No," he said. I could have wept over that innocent old gentleman's childlike confidence of appetite and guileless trust of the deep.

We went on deck, where one of the gentle beings of our party declared that she would remain as long as Genoa was in sight; and, to tell the truth, the scene was worthy of the promised devotion. There, in a half-circle before us, blazed the lights of the quay; above these twinkled the lamps of the steep streets and climbing palaces; over and behind all hung the darkness on the heights,—a sable cloud

dotted with ruddy points of flame burning in the windows of invisible houses.

“ Merrily did we drop ”

down the bay, and presently caught the heavy swell of the open sea. The other gentle being of our party then clutched my shoulder with a dreadful shudder, and, after gasping, “ O Mr. Scribbler, why *will* the ship roll so ? ” was meekly hurried below by her sister, who did not return for a last glimpse of Genoa the Proud.

In a moment heaven’s sweet pity flapped away as with the seagull’s wings, and I too felt that there was no help for it, and that I must go and lie down in the cabin. With anguished eyes I beheld upon the shelf opposite to mine the innocent old gentleman who had lately supped so confidently on sardines and fruit-pie. He lay upon his back, groaning softly to himself.

VI.

BY SEA FROM GENOA TO NAPLES.

I.

LIKE the Englishman who had no prejudices, I do hate a Frenchman; and there were many Frenchmen among our passengers on the *Messina*, in whose company I could hardly have been happy, had I not seen them horribly sea-sick. After the imprudent old gentleman of the sardines and fruit-pie, these wretched Gauls were the first to be seized with the malady, which became epidemic, and were miserable up to the last moment on board. To the enormity of having been born Frenchmen, they added the crime of being commercial travellers,—a class of fellow-men of whom we know little at home, but who are met everywhere in European travel. They spend more than half their lives in movement from place to place, and they learn to snatch from every kind of travel its meagre comforts, with an insolent disregard of the rights and feelings of other passengers. They excuse an abom-

inable trespass with a cool “Pardon!” take the best seat everywhere, and especially treat women with a savage rudeness, to which an American vainly endeavours to accustom his temper. I have seen commercial travellers of all nations, and I think I must award the French nation the discredit of producing the most odious commercial travellers in the world. The Englishman of this species wraps himself in his rugs, and rolls into his corner, defiantly, but not aggressively, boorish ; the Italian is almost a gentleman ; the German is apt to take sausage out of a newspaper and eat it with his penknife ; the Frenchman aggravates human nature beyond endurance by his restless ill-breeding, and his evident intention not only to keep all his own advantages, but to steal some of yours upon the first occasion. There were three of these monsters on our steamer : one a slight, bloodless young man, with pale blue eyes and an incredulous grin ; another, a gigantic full-bearded animal in spectacles ; the third, an infamous plump little creature, in absurdly tight pantaloons, with a cast in his eye, and a habit of sucking his teeth at table. When this wretch was not writhing in the agonies of sea-sickness he was on deck with his com-

rades, lecturing them upon various things, to which the bloodless young man listened with his incredulous grin, and the bearded giant in spectacles attended with a choked look about the eyes, like a suffering ox. They were constantly staggering in and out of their state-room, which, for my sins, was also mine ; and opening their abominable commodious travelling bags, or brushing their shaggy heads at the reeling mirror, and since they were born into the world, I think they had never cleaned their finger-nails. They wore their hats at dinner, but always went away, after soup, deadly pale.

II.

IN contrast with these cattle, what polished and courtly gentlemen were the sailors and firemen ! As for our captain, he would in any company have won notice for his gentle and high-bred way ; in his place at the head of the table among these Frenchmen, he seemed to me the finest gentleman I had ever seen. He had spent his whole life at sea, and had voyaged in all parts of the world except Japan, where he meant some day, he said, to go. He had been first a cabin-boy on a little Genoese schooner, and he had gradually risen to the first place on a

sailing-vessel, and now he had been selected to fill a commander's post on this line of steamers. (It is an admirable line of boats, not belonging, I believe, to the Italian Government, but much under its control, leaving Genoa every day for Leghorn, Naples, Palermo, and Ancona, on the Adriatic coast.) The captain had sailed a good deal in American waters, but chiefly on the Pacific coast, trading from the Spanish republican ports to those of California. He had been in that State during its effervescent days, when everything foul floated to the top, and I am afraid he formed there but a bad opinion of our people, though he was far too courteous to say outright anything of this sort.

He had very fine, shrewd blue eyes, a lean, weather-beaten, kindly face, and a cautious way of saying things. I hardly expected him to turn out so red-hot a Democrat as he did on better acquaintance, but, being a warm friend of man myself, I was not sorry. Garibaldi was the beginning and ending of his political faith, as he is with every enthusiastic Italian. The honest soul's conception of all concrete evil was brought forth in two words, of odd enough application. In Europe, and Italy more particularly, true men have suffered chiefly

from this form of evil, and the captain evidently could conceive of no other cause of suffering anywhere. We were talking of the American war, and when the captain had asked the usual question, "*Quando finirà mai questa guerra?*" and I had responded as usual, "*Ah, ci vuol pazienza!*" the captain gave a heavy sigh, and, turning his head pensively aside, plucked his grapes from the cluster a moment in silence.

Then he said, "You Americans are in the habit of attributing this war to slavery. The cause is not sufficient."

I ventured to demur and explain. "No," said the captain, "the cause is not sufficient. We Italians know the only cause which could produce a war like this."

I was naturally anxious to be instructed in the Italian theory, hoping it might be profounder than the English notion that we were fighting about tariffs.

The captain frowned, looked at me carefully, and then said—

"In this world there is but one cause of mischief—the Jesuits."

III.

THE first night out, from Genoa to Leghorn, was bad enough, but that which suc-

ceeded our departure from the latter port was by far the worst of the three we spent in our voyage to Naples. How we envied the happy people who went ashore at Leghorn ! I think we even envied the bones of the Venetians, Pisans, and Genoese who met and slew each other in the long-forgotten sea-fights, and sank too deeply through the waves to be stirred by their restless tumult. Every one has heard tell of how cross and treacherous a sea the Mediterranean is in winter, and my own belief is, that he who has merely been sea-sick on the Atlantic should give the Mediterranean a trial before professing to have suffered everything of which human nature is capable. Our steamer was clean enough and staunch enough, but she was not large—no bigger, I thought, than a gondola, that night as the waves tossed her to and fro, till unwinged things took flight all through her cabins and over her decks. My berth was placed transversely instead of lengthwise with the boat, —an ingenious arrangement to heighten seasick horrors, and dash the blood of the sufferer from brain to boots with exaggerated violence at each roll of the boat ; and I begged the steward to let me sleep upon one of the lockers in the cabin. I found many

of my agonised species already laid out there ; and the misery of the three French commercial travellers was so great that, in the excess of my own dolor, it actually afforded me a kind of happiness, and I found myself smiling at times to see the giant, with the eyes of a choked ox, rise up and faintly bellow. Indeed, there was something eldritch and unearthly in the whole business, and I think a kind of delirium must have resulted from the sea-sickness. Otherwise, I shall not know how to account for having attributed a kind of consciousness and individuality to the guide-book of a young American who had come aboard at Leghorn. He turned out afterward to be the sweetest soul in the world, and I am sorry now that I regarded with amusement his failure to smoke off his sickness. He was reading his guide-book with great diligence and unconcern, when suddenly I marked him lay it softly, softly down, with that excessive deliberation which men use at such times, and vanish with great dignity from the scene. Thus abandoned to its own devices, this guide-book began its night-long riots, setting out upon a tour of the cabin with the first lurch of the boat that threw it from the table upon the floor.

I heard it careen at once wildly to the cabin door and knock to get out ; and, failing in this, return deliberately to the stern of the boat, interrogating the tables and chairs, which had got their sea-legs on, and asking them how they found themselves. Arrived again at the point of starting, it seemed to pause a moment, and then I saw it setting forth on a voyage of pleasure in the low company of a French hat, which, being itself a French book, I suppose it liked. In these travels they both ran under the feet of one of the stewards, and were replaced by an immense *tour de force* on the table, from which the book eloped again,—this time in company with an overcoat : but it seemed the coat was too miserable to go far ; it stretched itself at full length on the floor, and suffered the book to dance over it, back and forth, I know not how many times. At last, as the actions of the book were becoming unendurable, and the general sea-sickness was waxing into a frenzy, a heavy roll, that made the whole ship shriek and tremble, threw us all from our lockers ; and gathering myself up, bruised and sore in every fibre, I lay down again and became sensible of a blissful, blissful lull ; the machinery had stopped, and, with the mute

hope that we were all going to the bottom, I fell tranquilly asleep.

IV.

IT appeared that the storm had really been dangerous. Instead of being only six hours from Naples, as we ought to be at this time, we were got no further than Porto Longone, in the Isle of Elba. We woke in a quiet, sheltered little bay, whence we could only behold, not feel, the storm left far out upon the open sea. From this we turned our heavy eyes gladly to the shore, where a white little town settled, like a flight of gulls upon the beach, at the feet of green and pleasant hills, whose gentle lines rhymed softly away against the sky. At the end of either arm of the embracing land in which we lay, stood grey, placid old forts, with peaceful sentries pacing their bastions, and weary ships creeping round their feet, under guns looking out so kindly and harmlessly, that I think General — himself would not have hesitated (except, perhaps, from a profound sentiment of regret for offering the violence) to attack them. Our port was full of frightened shipping—steamers, brigs, and schooners—of all sizes and nations; and since it was our misfortune that Napoleon

spent his exile in Elba at Porto Ferrato instead of Porto Longone, we amused ourselves with looking at the vessels and the white town and the soft hills, instead of hunting up dead lion's tracks.

Our fellow-passengers began to develop themselves, the regiment of soldiers whom we were transporting picturesquely break-fasted forward, and the second-cabin people came aft to our deck, while the English engineer (there are English engineers on all the Mediterranean steamers) planted a camp-stool in a sunny spot, and sat down to read the *Birmingham Express*.

Our friends of the second cabin were chiefly officers with their wives and families, and they talked for the most part of their sufferings during the night. They spoke such exquisite Italian that I thought them Tuscans, but they told me they were of Sicily, where their beautiful speech first had life. Let us hear what they talked of in their divine language, and with that ineffable *tonic* accent which no foreigner perfectly acquires ; and let us for once translate the profanities, Pagan and Christian, which adorn common parlance in Italy :—

“ Ah, my God ! how much I suffered ! ” says a sweet little woman with gentle brown

eyes, red, red lips, and blameless Greek lines of face. "I broke two basins!"

"There were ten broken in all, by Diana!" says this lady's sister.

"Presence of the Devil!" says her husband; and

"Body of Bacchus!" her young brother, puffing his cigar.

"And you, sir," said the lady, turning to a handsome young fellow in civil dress, near her, "how did you pass this horrible night?"

"Oh!" says the young man, twirling his heavy blond mustache, "mighty well—mighty well!"

"Oh, mercy of God! You were not sick?"

"I, Signora, am never sea-sick. I am of the navy."

At which they all cry Oh, and Ah, and declare they are glad of it, though why they should have been I don't know to this day.

"I have often wished," added the young man meditatively, and in a serious tone, as if he had indeed given the subject much thought, "that it might please God to let me be sea-sick once, if only that I might know how it feels. But no!" He turned the conversation, as if his disappointment were too sore to dwell upon; and, hearing our English, he made out to let us know

that he had been at New York, and could speak our language, which he proceeded to do, to the great pride of his countrymen, and our own astonishment at the remarkable forms of English speech to which he gave utterance.

V.

WE set out from Porto Longone that night at eight o'clock, and next evening, driving through much-abated storm southward into calm waters and clear skies, reached Naples. At noon, Monte Circeo, where Circe led her disreputable life, was a majestic rock against blue heaven and broken clouds ; after night-fall, and under the risen moon, Vesuvius crept softly up from the sea, and stood a graceful steep, with wreaths of lightest cloud upon its crest, and the city lamps circling far round its bay.

VII.

CERTAIN THINGS IN NAPLES.

I.

PERHAPS some reader of mine who visited Naples under the old disorder of things, when the Bourbon and the Camorra reigned, will like to hear that the pitched battle which travellers formerly fought, in landing from their steamer, is now gone out of fashion. Less truculent boatmen I never saw than those who rowed us ashore at Naples ; they were so quiet and peaceful that they harmonised perfectly with that tranquil scene of drowsy-twinkling city lights, slumbrous mountains, and calm sea, and, as they dipped softly toward us in the glare of the steamer's lamps, I could only think of Tennyson's description :—

“ And round about the keel with faces pale,
Dark faces pale against the rosy flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy lotus-eaters came.”

The mystery of this placidity had been

already solved by our captain, whom I had asked what price I should bargain to pay from the steamer to the shore. "There is a tariff," said he, "and the boatmen keep to it. The Neapolitans are good people (*buona gente*), and only needed justice to make them obedient to the laws." I must say that I found this to be true. The fares of all public conveyances are now fixed, and the attempts which drivers occasionally make to cheat you seem to be rather the involuntary impulses of old habit than deliberate intentions to do you wrong. You pay what is due, and as your man merely rumbles internally when you turn away, you must be a very timid *signorino* indeed if you buy his content with anything more. I fancy that all these things are now much better managed in Italy than in America, only we grumble at them there and stand them in silence at home. Every one can recall frightful instances of plunder, in which he was the victim, at New York—in which the robbery had none of the neatness of an operation, as it often has in Italy, but was a brutal mutilation. And then as regards civility from the same kind of people in the two countries, there is no comparison that holds in favour of us. All

questions are readily and politely answered in Italian travel, and the servants of companies are required to be courteous to the public; whereas, one is only too glad to receive a silent snub from such people at home.

II.

THE first sun that rose after our arrival in Naples was mild and warm as a May sun, though we were quite in the heart of November. We early strolled out under it into the crowded ways of the city, and drew near as we might to that restless, thronging, gossiping southern life, in contrast with which all northern existence seems only a sort of hibernation. The long Toledo, on which the magnificence of modern Naples is threaded, is the most brilliant and joyous street in the world; but I think there is less of the quaintness of Italian civilisation to be seen in its vivacious crowds than anywhere else in Italy. One easily understands how, with its superb length and straightness, and its fine, respectable, commonplace-looking houses, it should be the pride of a people fond of show; but after Venice and Genoa it has no picturesque charm; nay, even busy Milan seems less modern and more pictur-

esque. The lines of the lofty palaces on the Toledo are seldom broken by the façade of a church or other public edifice ; and when this does happen, the building is sure to be coldly classic or frantically baroque.

You weary of the Toledo's perfect repair, of its monotonous iron balconies, its monotonous lofty windows ; and it would be insufferable if you could not turn out from it at intervals into one of those wondrous little streets which branch up on one hand and down on the other, rising and falling with flights of steps between the high, many-balconied walls. They ring all day with the motleyest life of fishermen, fruit-vendors, chestnut-roasters, and idlers of every age and sex ; and there is nothing so full of local colour, unless it be the little up-and-down-hill streets in Genoa. Like those, the by-streets of Naples are only meant for foot-passengers, and a carriage never enters them ; but sometimes, if you are so blest, you may see a mule climbing the long stairways, moving solemnly under a stack of straw, or tinkling gaily down-stairs, bestridden by a swarthy, handsome peasant—all glittering teeth and eyes and flaming Phrygian cap. The rider exchanges lively salutations and sarcasms with the bystanders in his way,

and perhaps brushes against the bag-pipers who bray constantly in those hilly defiles. They are in Neapolitan costume, these *pifferari*, and have their legs incomprehensibly tied up in the stockings and garters affected by the peasantry of the provinces, and wear brave red sashes about their waists. They are simple, harmless-looking people, and would no doubt rob and kill in the most amiable manner, if brigandage came into fashion in their neighbourhood.

Sometimes the student of men may witness a Neapolitan quarrel in these streets, and may pick up useful ideas of invective from the remarks of the fat old women who always take part in the contests. But, though we were ten days in Naples, I only saw one quarrel, and I could have heard much finer violence of language among the gondoliers at any ferry in Venice than I heard in this altercation.

The Neapolitans are, of course, furious in traffic. They sell a great deal, and very boisterously, the fruit of the cactus, which is about as large as an egg, and which they peel to a very bloody pulp, and lay out, a sanguinary presence, on boards for purchase. It is not good to the uncultivated taste ; but the stranger may stop and drink, with relish

and refreshment, the orangeade and lemonade mixed with snow, and sold at the little booths on the street corners. These stands look much like the shrines of the Madonna in other Italian cities, and a friend of ours was led, before looking carefully into their office, to argue immense Neapolitan piety from the frequency of their ecclesiastical architecture. They are, indeed, the shrines of a god much worshipped during the long Neapolitan summers ; and it was the profound theory of the Bourbon kings of Naples, that, if they kept their subjects well supplied with snow to cool their drink, there was no fear of revolution. It shows how liable statesmen are to err, that, after all, the Neapolitans rose, drove out the Bourbons, and welcomed Garibaldi.

The only part of the picturesque life of the side streets which seems ever to issue from them into the Toledo is the goatherd with his flock of milch-goats, which mingle with the passers in the avenues as familiarly as with those of the alley, and thrust aside silk-hidden hoops, and brush against dandies' legs, in their course, but keep on perfect terms with everybody. The goatherd leads the eldest of the flock, and the rest follow in docile order, and stop as he stops to ask at

the doors if milk is wanted. When he happens to have an order, one of the goats is haled, much against her will, into the entry of a house, and there milked, while the others wait outside alone, nibbling and smelling thoughtfully about the masonry. It is noticeable that none of the good-natured passers seem to think these goats a great nuisance in the crowded street; but all make way for them as if they were there by perfect right, and were no inconvenience.

On the Toledo people keep upon the narrow side-walks, or strike out into the carriage-way, with an indifference to hoofs and wheels which one, after long residence in tranquil Venice, cannot acquire, in view of the furious Neapolitan driving. That old comprehensive gig of Naples, with which many pens and pencils have familiarised the reader, is nearly as hard to find there now as the *lazzaroni*, who have gone out altogether. You may still see it in the remoter quarters of the city, with its complement of twelve passengers to one horse, distributed, two on each thill, four on the top seats, one at each side, and two behind; but in the Toledo it has given place to much finer vehicles. Slight buggies, which take you

anywhere for half a franc, are the favourite means of public conveyance, and the private turn-outs are of every description and degree. Indeed, all the Neapolitans take to carriages, and the Strand in London at six o'clock in the evening is not a greater jam of wheels than the Toledo in the afternoon. Shopping feels the expansive influence of the out-of-doors life, and ladies do most of it as they sit in their open carriages at the shop doors, ministered to by the neat-handed shopmen. They are very languid ladies, as they recline upon their carriage cushions ; they are all black-eyed, and of an olive pallor, and have gloomy rings about their fine eyes, like the dark-faced dandies who bow to them. This Neapolitan look is very curious, and I have not seen it elsewhere in Italy ; it is a look of peculiar pensiveness, and comes, no doubt, from the peculiarly heavy growth of lashes which fringes the lower eyelid. Then there is the weariness in it of all peoples whose summers are fierce and long.

As the Italians usually dress beyond their means, the dandies of Naples are very gorgeous. If it is now, say, four o'clock in the afternoon, they are all coming down the Toledo with the streams of carriages bound for the long drive around the bay. But our

foot-passers go to walk in the beautiful Villa Reale, between this course and the sea. The Villa is a slender strip of Paradise, a mile long ; it is rapture to walk in it, and it comes, in description, to be a garden-grove, with feathery palms, Greekish temples, musical fountains, white statues of the gods, and groups of fair girls in spring silks. If I remember aright, the sun is always setting on the bay, and you cannot tell whether this sunset is cooled by the water or the water is warmed by the golden light upon it, and upon the city, and upon all the soft mountain-heights around.

III.

WALKING westward through the whole length of the Villa Reale, and keeping with the crescent shore of the bay, you come, after a while, to the Grot of Posilipo, which is not a grotto, but a tunnel cut for a carriage-way under the hill. It serves, however, the purpose of a grotto, if a grotto has any, and is of great length and dimness, and is all a-twinkle night and day with numberless lamps. Overlooking the street which passes into it is the tomb of Virgil, and it is this you have come to see. To reach it, you knock first at the door of a blacksmith, who

calls a species of custodian, and, when this latter has opened a gate in a wall, you follow him up-stairs into a market garden.

In one corner, and standing in a leafy and grassy shelter, somewhat away from the vegetables, is the poet's tomb, which has a kind of claim to genuineness by virtue of its improbable appearance. It looks more like a bake-oven than even the Pompeian tombs ; the masonry is antique, and is at least in skilful imitation of the fine Roman work. The interior is a small chamber with vaulted or wagon-roof ceiling, under which a man may stand upright, and at the end next the street is a little stone commemorating the place as Virgil's tomb, which was placed there by the Queen of France in 1840, and said by the custodian (a singularly dull ass) to be an exact copy of the original, whatever the original may have been. This guide could tell us nothing more about it, and was too stupidly honest to pretend to know more. The laurel planted by Petrarch at the door of the tomb, and renewed in later times by Casimir Delavigne, has been succeeded by a third laurel. The present twig was so slender, and looked so friendless and unprotected, that even enthusiasm for the memory of two poets could not be brought to rob it

of one of its few leaves ; and we contented ourselves with plucking some of the grass and weeds that grew abundantly on the roof of the tomb.

There was a dusty quiet within the tomb, and a grassy quiet without, that pleased exceedingly ; but though the memories of the place were so high and epic, it only suggested bucolic associations, and, sunken into that nook of hill-side verdure, made me think of a spring-house on some far-away Ohio farm ; a thought that, perhaps, would not have offended the poet, who loved and sang of humble country things, and, drawing wearily to his rest here, no doubt turned and remembered tenderly the rustic days before the excellent veterans of Augustus came to exile him from his father's farm at Mantua, and banish him to mere glory. But I believe most travellers have much nobler sensations in Virgil's tomb, and there is a great deal of testimony borne to their lofty sentiments on every scribbleable inch of its walls. Valery reminded me that Boccaccio, standing near it of old, first felt his fate decided for literature. Did he come there, I wonder, with poor Fiammetta, and enter the tomb with her tender hand in his, before ever he thought of that cruel absence

she tells of? "O donne pietose!" I hope so, and that this pilgrimage, half of love and half of letters, took place, "nel tempo nel quale la rivestita terra più che tutto l'altro anno si mostra bella."

If you ascend from the tomb and turn Naples-ward from the crest of the hill, you have the loveliest view in the world of the sea and of the crescent beach, mightily jewelled at its further horn with the black Castel dell' Ovo. Fishermen's children are playing all along the foamy border of the sea, and boats are darting out into the surf. The present humble muse is not above saying also that the linen which the laundresses hang to dry upon lines along the beach takes the sun like a dazzling flight of white birds, and gives a breezy life to the scene which it could not spare.

IV.

THERE was a little church on our way back from Posilipo, into which we lounged a moment, pausing at the altar of some very successful saint near the door. Here there were great numbers of the usual offerings from the sick whom the saint had eased of their various ills,—waxen legs and arms from people who had been in peril of losing

their limbs, as well as eyes, noses, fingers, and feet, and the crutches of those cured of lameness ; but we were most amused with the waxen effigies of several entire babies hung up about the altar, which the poor souls who had been near losing the originals had brought there in gratitude to the saint.

Generally, however, the churches of Naples are not very interesting, and one who came away without seeing them would have little to regret. The pictures are seldom good ; and though there are magnificent chapels in St. Januarius, and fine Gothic tombs at Santa Chiara, the architecture is usually rococo. I fancy that Naples has felt the damage of Spanish taste in such things as well as Spanish tyranny in others. Indeed, I saw much there which reminded me of what I had read about Spain rather than what I had seen in Italy ; and all Italian writers are agreed in attributing the depravation of Naples to the long Spanish dominion. It is well known how the Spaniards rule their provinces, and their gloomy despotism was probably never more cruelly felt than in Italy, where the people were least able to bear it. I had a heartfelt exultation in walking through the quarter of the city where the tumults of

Massaniello had raged, and, if only for a few days, struck mortal terror to the brutal pride of the viceroy ; but I think I had a better sense of the immense retribution which has overtaken all memory of Spanish rule in Naples as we passed through the palace of Capo di Monte. This was the most splendid seat of the Spanish Bourbon, whose family, inheriting its power from the violence of other times, held it with violence in these ; and in one of the chief saloons of the palace, which is now Victor Emanuel's, were pictures representing scenes of the revolution of 1860, while the statuette of a Garibaldino, in his red shirt and all his heroic rudeness, was defiantly conspicuous on one of the tables.

v.

THERE was nothing else that pleased me as well in the palace, or in the grounds about it. These are all laid out in pleasant successions of grove, tangled wilderness, and pasture-land, and were thronged, the Saturday afternoon of our visit, with all ranks of people, who strolled through the beautiful walks and enjoyed themselves in the peculiarly peaceful Italian way. Valery says that the Villa Reale in the Bourbon

time was closed, except for a single day in the year, to all but the nobles ; and that on this occasion it was filled with pretty peasant women, who made it a condition of their marriage bargains that their husbands should bring them to the Villa Reale on St. Mary's Day. It is now free to all on every day of the year, and the grounds of the Palace Capo di Monte are opened every Saturday. I liked the pleasant way in which sylvan Nature and Art had made friends in these beautiful grounds, in which Nature had consented to overlook even the foolish vanity of the long aisles of lime, cut and trimmed in formal and fantastic shapes, according to the taste of the silly times of bagwigs and patches. On every side wild birds fluttered through these absurd trees, and in the thickets lurked innumerable pheasants, which occasionally issued forth and stalked in stately, fearless groups over the sunset-crimsoned lawns. There was a brown gamekeeper for nearly every head of game, wearing a pheasant's wing in his hat and carrying a short, heavy sword ; and our driver told us, with an awful solemnity in his bated breath, that no one might kill this game but the king, under penalty of the galleys.

VI.

WE went one evening to the opera at San Carlo. It is one of the three theatres—San Carlo of Naples, La Scala of Milan, and Fenice of Venice—on which the Italians pride themselves ; and it is certainly very large and imposing. The interior has a *bel colpo d'occhio*, which is what many Italians chiefly value in morals, manners, and architecture ; but after this comes great shabbiness of detail. The boxes, even of the first order, are paved with brick tiles, and the red velvet border of the box which the people see from the pit is not supported in style by the seats within, which are merely covered with red oil-cloth. The opera we saw was also second-rate, and was to the splendour of the scenic arrangements what the oil-cloth was to the velvet. The house was full of people, but the dress of the audience was not so fine as we had expected in Naples. The evening dress is not *de rigueur* at Italian theatres, and people seemed to have come to San Carlo in any pleasant carelessness of costume.

VII.

THE Italians are simple and natural folks,

pleased through all their show of conventionality with little things, and as easy and unconscious as children in their ways. There happened to be a new caffè opened in Naples while we were there, and we had the pleasure of seeing all ranks of people affected by its magnificence. Artless throngs blocked the side-walk day and night before its windows, gazing upon its mirrors, fountains, and frescoes, and regarding the persons over their coffee within as beings lifted by sudden magic out of the common orbit of life and set dazzling in a higher sphere. All the waiters were uniformed and brass-buttoned to blinding effect, and the head waiter was a majestic creature in a long blue coat reaching to his feet, and armed with a mighty silver-headed staff. This gorgeous apparition did nothing but walk up and down, and occasionally advance toward the door, as if to disperse the crowds. At such times, however, before executing his purpose, he would glance round on the splendours they were admiring, and, as if smitten with a sense of the enormous cruelty he had meditated in thinking to deprive them of the sight, would falter and turn away, leaving his intent unfulfilled.

VIII.

A DAY IN POMPEII.

I.

ON the second morning after our arrival in Naples, we took the seven o'clock train, which leaves the Nineteenth Century for the first cycle of the Christian Era, and, skirting the waters of the Neapolitan bay almost the whole length of our journey, reached the railway station of Pompeii in an hour. As we rode along by that bluest sea, we saw the fishing-boats go out, and the foamy waves (which it would be an insolent violence to call breakers) come in ; we saw the mountains slope their tawny and golden manes caressingly downward to the waters, where the islands were dozing yet ; and landward, on the left, we saw Vesuvius, with his brown mantle of ashes drawn close about his throat, reclining on the plain, and smoking a bland and thoughtful morning pipe, of which the silver fumes curled lightly, lightly upward in the sunrise.

We dismounted at the station, walked a

few rods eastward through a little cotton-field, and found ourselves at the door of Hotel Diomed, where we took breakfast for a number of sesterces, which I am sure it would have made an ancient Pompeian stir in his urn to think of paying. But in Italy one learns the chief Italian virtue, patience, and we paid our account with the utmost good-nature. There was compensation in store for us, and the guide whom we found at the gate leading up the little hill to Pompeii inclined the disturbed balance in favour of our happiness. He was a Roman, spoke Italian that Beatrice might have addressed to Dante, and was numbered Twenty-six. I suppose it is known that the present Italian Government forbids people to be pillaged in any way on its premises, and that the property of the State is no longer the traffic of custodians and their pitiless race. At Pompeii each person pays two francs for admission, and is rigorously forbidden by recurrent sign-boards to offer money to the guides. Ventisei (as we shall call him) himself pointed out one of these notices in English, and did his duty faithfully without asking or receiving fees in money. He was a soldier, like all the other guides, and was a most intelligent, obliging fellow, with a

self-respect and dignity worthy of one of our own volunteer soldiers.

Ventisei took us up the winding slope, and led us out of this living world through the Sea-gate of Pompeii back into the dead past—the past which, with all its sensuous beauty and grace, and all its intellectual power, I am not sorry to have dead, and, for the most part, buried. Our feet had hardly trodden the lava flagging of the narrow streets when we came in sight of the labourers who were exhumeing the inanimate city. They were few in number, not perhaps a score, and they worked tediously, with baskets to carry away the earth from the excavation, boys and girls carrying the baskets, and several athletic old women plying picks, while an overseer sat in a chair near by, and smoked, and directed their exertions.

They dig down about eight or ten feet, uncovering the walls and pillars of the houses, and the mason, who is at hand, places little iron rivets in the stucco to prevent its fall where it is weak, while an artist attends to wash and clean the frescoes as fast as they are exposed. The soil through which the excavation first passes is not of great depth; the ashes which fell damp with scalding rain, in the second eruption, are perhaps five feet

thick ; the rest is of that porous stone which descended in small fragments during the first eruption. A depth of at least two feet in this stone is always left untouched by the labourers till the day when the chief superintendent of the work comes out from Naples to see the last layers removed ; and it is then that the beautiful mosaic pavements of the houses are uncovered, and the interesting and valuable objects are nearly always found.

The wonder was, seeing how slowly the work proceeded, not that two-thirds of Pompeii were yet buried, but that one-third had been exhumed. We left these hopeless toilers, and went down-town into the Forum, stepping aside on the way to look into one of the Pompeian Courts of Common Pleas.

II.

Now Pompeii is, in truth, so full of marvel and surprise, that it would be unreasonable to express disappointment with Pompeii in fiction. And yet I cannot help it. An exuberant carelessness of phrase in most writers and talkers who describe it had led me to expect much more than it was possible to find there. In my Pompeii I confess that the houses had no roofs—in fact, the rafters which sustained the tiles being burnt, how

could the roofs help falling in ? But otherwise my Pompeii was a very complete affair : the walls all rose to their full height ; doorways and arches were perfect ; the columns were all unbroken and upright ; putting roofs on my Pompeii, you might have lived in it very comfortably. The real Pompeii is different. It is seldom that any wall is unbroken ; most columns are fragmentary ; and, though the ground-plans are always distinct, very few rooms in the city are perfect in form, and the whole is much more ruinous than I thought.

But this ruin once granted, and the idle disappointment at its greatness overcome, there is endless material for study, instruction, and delight. It is the revelation of another life, and the utterance of the past is here more perfect than anywhere else in the world. Indeed, I think that the true friend of Pompeii should make it a matter of conscience, on entering the enchanted city, to cast out of his knowledge all the rubbish that has fallen into it from novels and travels, and to keep merely the facts of the town's luxurious life and agonising death, with such incidents of the eruption as he can remember from the description of Pliny. These are the spells to which the sorcery

yields, and with these in your thought you rehabilitate the city until Ventisei seems to be a *valet de place* of the first century, and yourselves a set of blond barbarians to whom he is showing off the splendours of one of the most brilliant towns of the empire of Titus. Those sad furrows in the pavement become vocal with the joyous rattle of chariot-wheels on a sudden, and you prudently step up on the narrow side-walks and rub along by the little shops of wine, and grain, and oil, with which the thrifty voluptuaries of Pompeii flanked their street doors. The counters of these shops run across their fronts, and are pierced with round holes on the top, through which you see dark depths of oil in the jars below, and not sullen lumps of ashes; those stately *amphoræ* behind are full of wine, and in the corners are bags of wheat.

“ This house, with a shop on either side, whose is it, XXVI. ? ”

“ It is the house of the great Sallust, my masters. Would you like his autograph? I know one of his slaves who would sell it.”

You are a good deal stared at, naturally, as you pass by, for people in Pompeii have not much to do, and, besides, a Briton is not an everyday sight there, as he will be

one of these centuries. The skins of wild beasts are little worn in Pompeii ; and those bold-eyed Roman women think it rather odd that we should like to powder our shaggy heads with brick-dust. However, these are matters of taste. We, for our part, cannot repress a feeling of disgust at the loungers in the street, who, XXVI. tells us, are all going to soak themselves half the day in the baths yonder ; for if there is in Pompeii one thing more offensive than another to our savage sense of propriety, it is the personal cleanliness of the inhabitants. We little know what a change for the better will be wrought in these people with the lapse of time, and that they will yet come to wash themselves but once a year, as we do.

(The reader may go on doing this sort of thing at some length for himself ; and may imagine, if he pleases, a boastful conversation among the Pompeians at the baths, in which the barbarians hear how Agricola has broken the backbone of a rebellion in Britain ; and in which all the speakers begin their observations with “ Ho ! my Lepidus ! ” and “ Ha ! my Diomed ! ” In the meantime we return to the present day, and step down the Street of Plenty along with Ventisei.)

III.

IT is proper, after seeing the sites of some of the principal temples in Pompeii (such as those of Jupiter and Venus), to cross the fields that cover a great breadth of the buried city, and look into the amphitheatre, where, as everybody knows, the lions had no stomach for Glaucus on the morning of the fatal eruption. The fields are now planted with cotton, and of course we thought those commonplaces about the wonder the Pompeians would feel could they come back to see that New-World plant growing above their buried homes. We might have told them, the day of our visit, that this cruel plant, so long watered with the tears of slaves and fed with the blood of men, was now an exile from its native fields, where war was ploughing with sword and shot the guilty land, and rooting up the subtlest fibres of the oppression in which cotton had grown king. And the ghosts of wicked old Pompeii, remembering the manifold sins that called the fires of hell to devour her, and thinking on this exiled plant, the latest witness of God's unforgetting justice, might well have shuddered, through all their shadow, to feel how terribly He destroys the enemies of Nature and man.

But the only Pompeian presence which haunted our passage of the cotton-field were certain small

“Phantoms of delight,”

with soft black eyes and graceful ways, who ran before us and plucked the bolls of the cotton and sold them to us. Embassies bearing red and white grapes were also sent out of the cottages to our excellencies ; and there was some doubt of the currency of the coin which we gave these poor children in return.

There are now but few peasants living on the land over the head of Pompeii, and the Government allows no sales of real estate to be made except to itself. The people who still dwell here can hardly be said to own their possessions, for they are merely allowed to cultivate the soil. A guard stationed night and day prevents them from making excavations, and they are severely restricted from entering the excavated quarters of the city alone.

The cotton whitens over two-thirds of Pompeii yet interred : happy the generation that lives to learn the wondrous secrets of that sepulchre ! For, when you have once been at Pompeii, this phantasm of the past takes deeper hold on your imagination than

any living city, and becomes and is the metropolis of your dreamland for ever. O marvellous city ! who shall reveal the cunning of your spell ? Something not death, something not life—something that is the one when you turn to determine its essence as the other ! What is it comes to me at this distance of that which I saw in Pompeii ? The narrow and curving, but not crooked streets, with the blazing sun of that Neapolitan November falling into them, or clouding their wheel-worn lava with the black, black shadows of the many-tinted walls ; the houses, and the gay columns of white, yellow, and red ; the delicate pavements of mosaic ; the skeletons of dusty cisterns and dead fountains ; inanimate garden spaces with pigmy statues suited to their littleness ; suites of fairy bed-chambers, painted with exquisite frescoes ; dining-halls with joyous scenes of hunt and banquet on their walls ; the ruinous sites of temples ; the melancholy emptiness of booths and shops and jolly drinking-houses ; the lone-some tragic theatre, with a modern Pompeian drawing water from a well there ; the baths with their roofs perfect yet, and the stucco bas-reliefs all but unharmed ; around the whole, the city wall crowned

with slender poplars ; outside the gates, the long avenue of tombs, and the Appian Way stretching on to Stabiae ; and, in the distance, Vesuvius, brown and bare, with his fiery breath scarce visible against the cloudless heaven ;—these are the things that float before my fancy as I turn back to look at myself walking those enchanted streets, and to wonder if I could ever have been so blest.

For there is nothing on the earth, or under it, like Pompeii.

The amphitheatre, to which we came now, after our stroll across the cotton-fields, was small, like the vastest things in Pompeii, and had nothing of the stately magnificence of the Arena at Verona, nor anything of the Roman Coliseum's melancholy and ruinous grandeur. But its littleness made it all the more comfortable and social, and, seated upon its benches under a cool awning, one could have almost chatted across the arena with one's friends ; could have witnessed the spectacle on the sands without losing a movement of the quick gladiators, or an agony of the victim given to the beasts—which must have been very delightful to a Pompeian of companionable habits and fine feelings. It is quite impossible, however, that the bouts described by Bulwer as tak-

ing place all at the same time on the arena should really have done so ; the combatants would have rolled and tumbled and trampled over each other an hundred times in the narrow space.

Of all the voices with which it once rang the poor little amphitheatre has kept only an echo. But this echo is one of the most perfect ever heard : prompt, clear, startling, it blew back the light chaff we threw to it with amazing vehemence, and almost made us doubt if it were not a direct human utterance. Yet how was Ventisei to know our names ? And there was no one else to call them but ourselves. Our “*dolce duca*” gathered a nosegay from the crumbling ledges, and sat down in the cool of the once-cruel cells beneath, and put it prettily together for the ladies. When we had wearied ourselves with the echo, he arose and led us back into Pompeii.

IV.

THE plans of nearly all the houses in the city are alike : the entrance-room next the door ; the parlour or drawing-room next that ; then the *impluvium*, or unroofed space in the middle of the house, where the rains were caught and drained into the cistern,

and where the household used to come to wash itself, primitively, as at a pump ; the little garden, with its painted columns, behind the *impluvium*, and, at last, the dining-room. There are minute bed-chambers on either side, and, as I said, a shop at one side in front, for the sale of the master's grain, wine, and oil. The pavements of all the houses are of mosaic, which, in the better sort, is very delicate and beautiful, and is found sometimes perfectly uninjured. An exquisite pattern, often repeated, is a ground of tiny cubes of white marble with dots of black dropped regularly into it. Of course there were many picturesque and fanciful designs, of which the best have been removed to the Museum in Naples ; but several good ones are still left, and (like that of the Wild Boar) give names to the houses in which they are found.

But, after all, the great wonder, the glory, of these Pompeian houses is in their frescoes. If I tried to give an idea of the luxury of colour in Pompeii, the most gorgeous adjectives would be as poorly able to reproduce a vivid and glowing sense of those hues as the photography which now copies the drawing of the decorations ; so I do not try.

I know it is a cheap and feeble thought, and yet, let the reader please to consider : A workman nearly two thousand years ago laying upon the walls those soft lines that went to make up fauns and satyrs, nymphs and naiads, heroes and gods and goddesses ; and getting weary and lying down to sleep, and dreaming of an eruption of the mountain ; of the city buried under a fiery hail, and slumbering in its bed of ashes seventeen centuries ; then of its being slowly exhumed, and, after another lapse of years, of some one coming to gather the shadow of that dreamer's work upon a plate of glass, that he might infinitely reproduce it and sell it to tourists at from five francs to fifty centimes a copy—I say, consider such a dream dreamed in the hot heart of the day, after certain cups of Vesuvian wine ! What a piece of *Katzenjammer* (I can use no milder term) would that workman think it when he woke again ! Alas ! what is history and the progress of the arts and sciences but one long *Katzenjammer* !

Photography cannot give, any more than I, the colours of the frescoes, but it can do the drawing better, and, I suspect, the spirit also. I used the word workman, and not artist, in speaking of the decoration of

the walls, for in most cases the painter was only an artisan, and did his work probably by the yard, as the artisan who paints walls and ceilings in Italy does at this day. But the old workman did his work much more skilfully and tastefully than the modern—threw on expanses of mellow colour, delicately panelled off the places for the scenes, and pencilled in the figures and draperies (there are usually more of the one than the other) with a deft hand. Of course, the houses of the rich were adorned by men of talent ; but it is surprising to see the community of thought and feeling in all this work, whether it be from cunniger or clumsy hands. The subjects are nearly always chosen from the fables of the gods, and they are in illustration of the poets, Homer and the rest. To suit that soft, luxurious life which people led in Pompeii, the themes are commonly amorous, and sometimes not too chaste ; there is much of Bacchus and Ariadne, much of Venus and Adonis, and Diana bathes a good deal with her nymphs,—not to mention frequent representations of the toilet of that beautiful monster which the lascivious art of the time loved to depict. One of the most pleasing of all the scenes is that, in one of the

houses, of the Judgment of Paris, in which the shepherd sits upon a bank in an attitude of ineffable and flattered importance, with one leg carelessly crossing the other, and both hands resting lightly on his shepherd's crook, while the goddesses before him await his sentence. Naturally the painter has done his best for the victress in this rivalry, and you see

“Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,”

as she should be, but with a warm and piquant spice of girlish resentment in her attitude, that Paris should pause for an instant, which is altogether delicious.

“And I beheld great Here's angry eyes.”

Awful eyes ! How did the painter make them ? The wonder of all these pagan frescoes is the mystery of the eyes—still, beautiful, anhuman. You cannot believe that it is wrong for those tranquil-eyed men and women to do evil, they look so calm and so unconscious in it all ; and in the presence of the celestials, as they bend upon you those eternal orbs, in whose regard you are but a part of space, you feel that here art has achieved the unearthly. I know of no words in literature which give a *sense* (nothing gives the idea) of the *stare* of these gods, except

that magnificent line of Kingsley's, describing the advance over the sea toward Andromeda of the oblivious and unsympathising Nereids. They floated slowly up, and their eyes

“Stared on her, silent and still, like the eyes in the house of the idols.”

The colours of this fresco of the Judgment of Paris are still so fresh and bright, that it photographs very well, but there are other frescoes wherein there is more visible perfection of line, but in which the colours are so dim that they can only be reproduced by drawings. One of these is the Wounded Adonis cared for by Venus and the Loves ; in which the story is treated with a playful pathos wonderfully charming. The fair boy leans in the languor of his hurt toward Venus, who sits utterly disconsolate beside him, while the Cupids busy themselves with such slight surgical offices as Cupids may render : one prepares a linen bandage for the wound, another wraps it round the leg of Adonis, another supports one of his heavy arms, another finds his emotions too much for him and pauses to weep. It is a pity that the colours of this beautiful fresco are grown so dim, and a greater pity that most of the other frescoes in Pompeii must share its fate, and

fade away. The hues are vivid when the walls are first uncovered, and the ashes washed from the pictures, but then the malice of the elements begins anew, and rain and sun draw the life out of tints which the volcano failed to obliterate. In nearly all cases they could be preserved by throwing a roof above the walls, and it is a wonder that the Government does not take this slight trouble to save them.

Among the frescoes which told no story but their own, we were most pleased with one in a delicately painted little bed-chamber. This represented an alarmed and furtive man, whom we at once pronounced The Belated Husband, opening a door with a night-latch. Nothing could have been better than this miserable wretch's cowardly haste and cautious noiselessness in applying his key ; apprehension sat upon his brow, confusion dwelt in his guilty eye. He had been out till two o'clock in the morning, electioneering for Pansa, the friend of the people ("Pansa, and Roman gladiators," "Pansa, and Christians to the Beasts," was the platform), and he had left his *placens uxor* at home alone with the children, and now within this door that *placens uxor* awaited him !

V.

You have read, no doubt, of their discovering, a year or two since, in making an excavation in a Pompeian street, the moulds of four human bodies, three women and a man, who fell down, blind and writhing, in the storm of fire eighteen hundred years ago; whose shape the settling and hardening ashes took; whose flesh wasted away, and whose bones lay there in the hollow of the matrix till the cunning of this time found them, and, pouring liquid plaster round the skeletons, clothed them with human form again, and drew them forth into the world once more. There are many things in Pompeii which bring back the gay life of the city, but nothing which so vividly reports the terrible manner of her death as these effigies of the creatures that actually shared it. The man in the last struggle has thrown himself upon his back, and taken his doom sturdily—there is a sublime calm in his rigid figure. The women lie upon their faces, their limbs tossed and distorted, their drapery tangled and heaped about them, and in every fibre you see how hard they died. One presses her face into her handkerchief to draw one last breath unmixed with scalding steam; an-

other's arms are wildly thrown abroad to clutch at help ; another's hand is appealingly raised, and on her slight fingers you see the silver hoops with which her poor dead vanity adorned them.

The guide takes you aside from the street into the house where they lie, and a dreadful shadow drops upon your heart as you enter their presence. Without, the hell-storm seems to fall again, and the whole sunny plain to be darkened with its ruin, and the city to send up the tumult of her despair.

What is there left in Pompeii to speak of after this ? The long street of tombs outside the walls ? Those that died before the city's burial seem to have scarcely a claim to the solemnity of death.

Shall we go see Diomed's Villa, and walk through the freedman's long underground vaults, where his friends thought to be safe, and were smothered in heaps ? The garden-ground grows wild among its broken columns with weeds and poplar saplings ; in one of the corridors they sell photographs, on which, if you please, Ventisei has his bottle, or drink-money. So we escape from the doom of the calamity, and so, at last, the severely forbidden *buonamano* is paid. A dog may die many deaths besides choking with butter.

We return slowly through the city, where we have spent the whole day, from nine till four o'clock. We linger on the way, imploring Ventisei if there is not something to be seen in this or that house ; we make our weariness an excuse for sitting down, and cannot rend ourselves from the bliss of being in Pompeii.

At last we leave its gates, and swear each other to come again many times while in Naples, and never go again.

Perhaps it was as well. You cannot repeat great happiness.

IX.

A HALF-HOUR AT HERCULANEUM.

I.

THE road from Naples to Herculaneum is, in fact, one long street; it hardly ceases to be city in Naples till it is town at Portici, and in the interval it is suburb, running between palatial lines of villas, which all have their names ambitiously painted over their doors. Great part of the distance this street is bordered by the bay, and, as far as this is the case, it is picturesque, as everything is belonging to marine life in Italy. Seafaring people go lounging up and down among the fishermen's boats drawn up on the shore, and among the fishermen's wives making nets, while the fishermen's children play and clamber everywhere, and over all flap and flutter the clothes hung on poles to dry. In this part of the street there are, of course, oysters, and grapes, and oranges, and cactus-pulps, and cutlery, and iced drinks to sell at

various booths ; and Commerce is exceedingly dramatic and boisterous over the bargains she offers ; and equally, of course, murderous drinking-shops lurk at intervals along the pavement, and lure into their recesses mariners of foreign birth, briefly ashore from their ships. The New York Coffee-House is there to attract my maritime fellow-countrymen, and I know that if I look into that place of refreshment I shall see their honest, foolish faces flushed with drink, and with the excitement of buying the least they can for the most money. Poor souls ! they shall drink that pleasant morning away in the society of Antonino, the best of Neapolitans, and at midnight, emptied of every soldo, shall arise, wrung with a fearful suspicion of treachery, and wander away under Antonino's guidance to seek the protection of the Consul ; or, taking the law into their own hands, shall proceed to clean out, *more Americano*, the New York Coffee-House, when Antonino shall develop into one of the landlords, and deal them the most artistic stab in Naples : handsome, worthy Antonino ; tender-eyed, subtle, pitiless !

II.

WHERE the road to Herculaneum leaves the bay and its seafaring life, it enters, between the walls of lofty, fly-blown houses, a world of maccaroni haunted by foul odours, beggars, poultry, and insects. There were few people to be seen on the street, but through the open doors of the lofty fly-blown houses we saw floury legions at work making maccaroni ; grinding maccaroni, rolling it, cutting it, hanging it in mighty skeins to dry, and gathering it when dried, and putting it away. By the frequency of the wine-shops we judged that the legions were a thirsty host, and, by the number of the barber-surgeons' shops, that they were a plethoric and too full-blooded host. The latter shops were in the proportion of one to five of the former ; and the artist who had painted their signs had indulged his fancy in wild excesses of phlebotomy. We had found that, as we came south from Venice, science grew more and more sanguinary in Italy, and more and more disposed to let blood. At Ferrara, even, the propensity began to be manifest on the barbers' signs, which displayed the device of an arm lanced at the elbow, and jetting the blood by a

neatly described curve into a tumbler. Further south the same arm was seen to bleed at the wrist also ; and at Naples an exhaustive treatment of the subject appeared, the favourite study of the artist being to represent a nude figure reclining in a genteel attitude on a bank of pleasant greensward, and bleeding from the elbows, wrists, hands, ankles, and feet.

III.

IN Naples everywhere one is surprised by the great number of English names which appear on business houses, but it was entirely bewildering to read a bill affixed to the gate of one of the villas on this road : “This Desirable Property for Sale.” I should scarcely have cared to buy that desirable property, though the neighbourhood seemed to be a favourite summer resort, and there were villas, as I said, nearly the whole way to Portici. Those which stood with their gardens toward the bay would have been tolerable, no doubt, if they could have kept their windows shut to the vile street before their doors ; but the houses opposite could have had no escape from its stench and noisomeness. It was

absolutely the filthiest street I have seen anywhere outside of New York, excepting only that little street which, in Herculaneum, leads from the theatre to the House of Argo.

This pleasant avenue has a stream of turbid water in its centre, bordered by begging children, and is either fouler or cleaner for the water, but I shall never know which. It is at a depth of some fifty or sixty feet below the elevation on which the present city of Portici is built, and is part of the excavation made long ago to reach the plain on which Herculaneum stands, buried under its half-score of successive layers of lava, and ashes, and Portici. We had the aid of all the virtuous poverty and leisure of the modern town—there was a vast deal of both, we found—in our search for the staircase by which you descend to the classic plain, and it proved a discovery involving the outlay of all the copper coin about us, while the sight of the famous theatre of Herculaneum was much more expensive than it would have been had we come there in the old time to see a play of Plautus or Terence.

As for the theatre, “the large and highly ornamented theatre” of which I read, only

a little while ago, in an encyclopædia, we found it by the light of our candles, a series of gloomy hollows, of the general complexion of coal-bins and potato-cellars. It was never perfectly dug out of the lava, and, as is known, it was filled up in the last century, together with other excavations, when they endangered the foundations of worthless Portici overhead. (I am amused to find myself so hot upon the poor property-holders of Portici. I suppose I should not myself, even for the cause of antiquity and the knowledge of classic civilisation, like to have my house tumbled about my ears.) But though it was impossible in the theatre of Herculaneum to gain any idea of its size or richness, I remembered there the magnificent bronzes which had been found in it, and did a hasty reverence to the place. Indeed, it is amazing, when one sees how small a part of Herculaneum has been uncovered, to consider the number of fine works of art in the Museo Borbonico which were taken thence, and which argue a much richer and more refined community than that of Pompeii. A third of the latter city has now been restored to the light of day ; but though it has yielded abundance of all the things that illustrate the domestic and

public life, and the luxury and depravity of those old times, and has given the once secret rooms of the museum their worst attraction, it still falls far below Herculaneum in the value of its contributions to the treasures of classic art, except only in the variety and beauty of its exquisite frescoes.

The effect of this fact is to stimulate the imagination of the visitor to that degree that nothing short of the instant destruction of Portici and the excavation of all Herculaneum will satisfy him. If the opening of one theatre, and the uncovering of a basilica and two or three houses, have given such richness to us, what delight and knowledge would not the removal of these obdurate hills of ashes and lava bestow !

Emerging from the coal-bins and potato-cellars, the visitor extinguishes his candle with a pathetic sigh, profusely rewards the custodian (whom he connects in some mysterious way with the ancient population of the injured city about him), and, thoughtfully removing the tallow from his fingers, follows the course of the vile stream already sung, and soon arrives at the gate opening into the exhumed quarter of Herculaneum. And there he finds a custodian who enters

perfectly into his feelings ; a custodian who has once been a guide in Pompeii, but now despises that wretched town, and would not be guide there for any money since he has known the superior life of Herculaneum ; who, in fine, feels toward Pompeii as a Bostonian feels toward New York. Yet the reader would be wrong to form the idea that there is bitterness in the disdain of this custodian. On the contrary, he is one of the best-natured men in the world. He is a mighty mass of pinguid bronze, with a fat lisp, and a broad, sunflower smile, and he lectures us with a vast and genial breadth of manner on the ruins, contradicting all our guesses at things with a sweet “*Perdoni, signori ! ma—.*” At the end, we find that he has some medallions of lava to sell : there is Victor Emanuel, or, if we are of the *partito d'azione*, there is Garibaldi ; both warm yet from the crater of Vesuvius, and of the same material which destroyed Herculaneum. We decline to buy, and the custodian makes the national shrug and grimace (signifying that we are masters of the situation, and that he washes his hands of the consequence of our folly) on the largest scale that we have ever seen : his mighty hands are rigidly thrust forth, his

great lip protruded, his enormous head thrown back to bring his face on a level with his chin. The effect is tremendous, but we nevertheless feel that he loves us the same.

IV.

THE afternoon on which we visited Herculaneum was in melancholy contrast to the day we spent in Pompeii. The lingering summer had at last saddened into something like autumnal gloom, and that blue, blue sky of Naples was overcast. So, this second draught of the spirit of the past had not only something of the insipidity of custom, but brought rather a depression than a lightness to our hearts. There was so little of Herculaneum: only a few hundred yards square are exhumed, and we counted the houses easily on the fingers of one hand, leaving the thumb to stand for the few rods of street that, with its flagging of lava and narrow border of foot-walks, lay between; and though the custodian, apparently moved at our dejection, said that the excavation was to be resumed the very next week, the assurance did little to restore our cheerfulness. Indeed, I fancy that these old cities must needs be seen in the sunshine

by those who would feel what gay lives they once led; by dimmer light they are very sullen spectres, and their doom still seems to brood upon them. I know that even Pompeii could not have been joyous that sunless afternoon, for what there was to see of mournful Herculaneum was as brilliant with colours as anything in the former city. Nay, I believe that the tints of the frescoes and painted columns were even brighter, and that the walls of the houses were far less ruinous than those of Pompeii. But no house was wholly freed from lava, and the little street ran at the rear of the buildings which were supposed to front on some grander avenue not yet exhumed. It led down, as the custodian pretended, to a wharf, and he showed an iron ring in the wall of the House of Argo, standing at the end of the street, to which, he said, his former fellow-citizens used to fasten their boats, though it was all dry enough there now. There is evidence in Herculaneum of much more ambitious domestic architecture than seems to have been known in Pompeii. The ground-plan of the houses in the two cities is alike; but in the former there was often a second story, as was proven by the charred ends of beams still protruding from

the walls, while in the latter there is only one house which is thought to have aspired to a second floor. The House of Argo is also much larger than any in Pompeii, and its appointments were more magnificent. Indeed, we imagined that in this more purely Greek town we felt an atmosphere of better taste in everything than prevailed in the fashionable Roman watering-place, though this, too, was a summer resort of the "best society" of the empire. The mosaic pavements were exquisite, and the little bed-chambers dainty and delicious in their decorations. The lavish delight in colour found expression in the vividest hues upon the walls ; and not only were the columns of the garden painted, but the foliage of the capitals was variously tinted. The garden of the House of Argo was vaster than any of the classic world which we had yet seen, and was superb with a long colonnade of unbroken columns. Between these and the walls of the houses was a pretty pathway of mosaic, and in the midst once stood marble tables, under which the workmen exhuming the city found certain crouching skeletons. At one end was the dining-room, of course, and painted on the wall was a lady with a parasol.

I thought all Herculaneum sad enough, but the profusion of flowers growing wild in this garden gave it a yet more tender and pathetic charm. Here—where so long ago the flowers had bloomed, and perished in the terrible blossoming of the mountain that sent up its fires in the awful similitude of Nature's harmless and lovely forms, and showered its destroying petals all abroad—was it not tragic to find again the soft tints, the graceful shapes, the sweet perfumes of the earth's immortal life? Of them that planted and tended and plucked and bore in their bosoms and twined in their hair these fragile children of the summer, what witness in the world? Only the crouching skeletons under the tables. Alas and alas!

v.

The skeletons went with us throughout Herculaneum, and descended into the cell, all green with damp, under the basilica, and lay down, fettered and manacled in the place of those found there beside the big bronze kettle in which the prisoners used to cook their dinners. How ghastly the thought of it was! If we had really seen this kettle and the skeletons there—as we did not—we could not have suffered more than we did.

They took all the life out of the House of Perseus, and the beauty from his pretty little domestic temple to the Penates, and this was all there was left in Herculaneum to see.

“Is there nothing else?” we demand of the custodian.

“Signori, this is all.”

“It is mighty little.”

“Perdoni, signori! ma—.”

“Well,” we say sourly to each other, glancing round at the walls of the pit, on the bottom of which the bit of city stands, “it is a good thing to know that Herculaneum amounts to nothing.”

X.

CAPRI AND CAPRIOTES.

I.

I HAVE no doubt

“Calm Capri waits,”

where we left it, in the Gulf of Salerno, for any traveller who may choose to pay it a visit ; but at the time we were there we felt that it was on exhibition for that day only, and would, when we departed, disappear in its sapphire sea, and be no more ; just as Niagara ceases to play as soon as your back is turned, and Venice goes out like a pyrotechnic display, and all marvellously grand and lovely things make haste to prove their impermanence.

We delayed some days in Naples in hopes of fine weather, and at last chose a morning that was warm and cloudy at nine o’clock, and burst into frequent passions of rain before we reached Sorrento at noon. The first half of the journey was made by rail, and brought us to Castellamare, whence we took

carriage for Sorrento, and oranges and rapture,—winding along the steep shore of the sea, and under the brows of wooded hills that rose high above us into the misty weather, and caught here and there the sunshine on their tops. In that heavenly climate no day can long be out of humour, and at Sorrento we found ours very pleasant, and rode delightedly through the devious streets, looking up to the terraced orange-groves on one hand, and down to the terraced orange-groves on the other, until at a certain turning of the way we encountered Antonino Occhio d'Argento, whom fate had appointed to be our boatman to Capri. We had never heard of Antonino before, and indeed had intended to take a boat from one of the hotels ; but when this corsair offered us his services, there was that guile in his handsome face, that cunning in his dark eyes, that heart could not resist, and we halted our carriage and took him at once.

He kept his boat in one of those caverns which honeycomb the cliff under Sorrento, and afford a natural and admirable shelter for such small craft as may be dragged up out of reach of the waves, and here I bargained with him before finally agreeing to go with him to Capri. In Italy it is cus-

tomary for a public carrier when engaged to give his employer as a pledge the sum agreed upon for his service, which is returned with the amount due him, at the end, if the service has been satisfactory ; and I demanded of Antonino this *caparra*, as it is called. “ What *caparra* ? ” said he, lifting the lid of his wicked eye with his forefinger, “ this is the best *caparra*, ” meaning a face as honest and trustworthy as the devil’s. The stroke confirmed my subjection to Antonino, and I took his boat without further parley, declining even to feel the muscle of his boatmen’s arms, which he exposed to my touch in evidence that they were strong enough to row us swiftly to Capri. The men were but two in number, but they tossed the boat lightly into the surf, and then lifted me aboard, and rowed to the little pier from which the ladies and T. got in.

The sun shone, the water danced and sparkled, and presently we raised our sail, and took the gale that blew for Capri—an oblong height rising ten miles beyond out of the heart of the azure gulf. On the way thither there was little interest but that of natural beauty in the bold, picturesque coast we skirted for some distance ; though

on one mighty rock there were the ruins of a seaward-looking Temple of Hercules, with arches of the unmistakable Roman masonry, below which the receding waves rushed and poured over a jetting ledge in a thunderous cataract.

Antonino did his best to entertain us, and lectured us unceasingly upon his virtue and his wisdom, dwelling greatly on the propriety and good policy of always speaking the truth. This spectacle of veracity became intolerable after a while, and I was goaded to say : "Oh, then, if you never tell lies, you expect to go to Paradise." "Not at all," answered Antonino compassionately, "for I have sinned much. But the lie doesn't go ahead" (*non va avanti*), added this Machiavelli of boatmen ; yet I think he was mistaken, for he deceived us with perfect ease and admirable success. All along, he had pretended that we could see Capri, visit the Blue Grotto, and return that day ; but as we drew near the island, painful doubts began to trouble him, and he feared the sea would be too rough for the Grotto part of the affair. "But there will be an old man," he said, with a subtle air of prophecy, "waiting for us on the beach. This old man is one of the Government

guides to the Grotto, and he will say whether it is to be seen to-day."

And certainly there was the old man on the beach—a short patriarch, with his baldness covered by a kind of bloated woollen sock—a blear-eyed sage, and a bare-legged. He waded through the surf toward the boat, and when we asked him whether the Grotto was to be seen, he paused knee-deep in the water (at a secret signal from Antonino, as I shall always believe), put on a face of tender solemnity, threw back his head a little, brought his hand to his cheek, expanded it, and said, "No ; to-day, no ! To-morrow, yes !" Antonino leaped joyously ashore, and delivered us over to the old man, to be guided to the Hotel di Londra, while he drew his boat up on the land. He had reason to be contented, for this artifice of the patriarch of Capri relieved him from the necessity of verifying to me the existence of an officer of extraordinary powers in the nature of a consul, who, he said, would not permit boats to leave Capri for the mainland after five o'clock in the evening.

When it was decided that we should remain on the island till the morrow, we found so much time on our hands, after bargaining for our lodging at the Hotel di Londra,

that we resolved to ascend the mountain to the ruins of the palaces of Tiberius, and to this end we contracted for the services of certain of the muletresses that had gathered about the inn-gate, clamorously offering their beasts. The muletresses chosen were a matron of mature years and of a portly habit of body ; her daughter, a mere child ; and her niece, a very pretty girl of eighteen, with a voice soft and sweet as a bird's. They placed the ladies, one on each mule, and then, while the mother and daughter devoted themselves to the hind-quarters of the foremost animal, the lovely niece brought up the rear of the second beast, and the patriarch went before, and T. and I trudged behind. So the cavalcade ascended ; first, from the terrace of the hotel overlooking the bit of shipping village on the beach, and next from the town of Capri, clinging to the hill-sides, midway between sea and sky, until at last it reached the heights on which the ruins stand. Our way was through narrow lanes, bordered by garden walls ; then through narrow streets bordered by dirty houses ; and then again by gardens, but now of a better sort than the first, and belonging to handsome villas.

On the road our pretty muletress gossiped

cheerfully, and our patriarch gloomily, and between the two we accumulated a store of information concerning the present inhabitants of Capri, which, I am sorry to say, has now for the most part failed me. I remember that they said most of the land-owners at Capri were Neapolitans, and that these villas were their country houses ; though they pointed out one of the statelylest of the edifices as belonging to a certain English physician who had come to visit Capri for a few days, and had now been living on the island twenty years, having married (said the muletress) the prettiest and poorest girl in the town. From this romance—something like which the muletress seemed to think might well happen concerning herself—we passed lightly to speak of kindred things, the muletress responding gaily between the blows she bestowed upon her beast. The accent of these Capriotes has something of German harshness and heaviness : they say *non bosso* instead of *non posso*, and *monto* instead of *mondo*, and interchange the *t* and *d* a good deal ; and they use for father the Latin *pater*, instead of *padre*. But this girl's voice, as I said, was very musical, and the island's accent was sweet upon her tongue.

I.—What is your name ?

She.—Caterina, little sir (*signorino*).

I.—And how old are you, Caterina ?

She.—Eighteen, little sir.

I.—And you are betrothed .

She feigns not to understand ; but the patriarch, who has dropped behind to listen to our discourse, explains—“ He asks if you are in love.”

She.—Ah, no ! little sir, not yet.

I.—No ? A little late, it seems to me. I think there must be some good-looking youngster who pleases you—no ?

She.—Ah, no ! one must work, one cannot think of marrying. We are four sisters, and we have only the *buonamano* from hiring these mules, and we must spin and cook.

The Patriarch.—Don’t believe her ; she has two lovers.

She.—Ah, no ! It isn’t true. He tells a fib—he !

But, nevertheless, she seemed to love to be accused of lovers,—such is the guile of the female heart in Capri,—and laughed over the patriarch’s wickedness. She confided that she ate maccaroni once a day, and she talked constantly of eating it just as the Northern Italians always talk of *polenta*. She was a true daughter of the

isle, and had never left it but once in her life, when she went to Naples. "Naples was beautiful, yes; but one always loves one's own country the best." She was very attentive and good, but at the end was rapacious of more and more *buonamano*. "Have patience with her, sir," said the blameless Antonino, who witnessed her greediness; "they do not understand certain matters here, poor little things!"

As for the patriarch, he was full of learning relative to himself and to Capri; and told me with much elaboration that the islanders lived chiefly by fishing, and gained something also by their vineyards. But they were greatly oppressed by taxes, and the strict enforcement of the conscriptions, and they had little love for the Italian Government, and wished the Bourbons back again. The Piedmontese, indeed, misgoverned them horribly. There was the Blue Grotto, for example; formerly travellers paid the guides five, six, ten francs for viewing it; but now the Piedmontese had made a tariff, and the poor guides could only exact a franc from each person. Things were in a ruinous condition.

By this we had arrived at a little inn on the top of the mountain, very near the

ruins of the palaces. "Here," said the patriarch, "it is customary for strangers to drink a bottle of the wine of Tiberius." We obediently entered the hostelry, and the landlord—a white-toothed, brown-faced, good-humoured peasant—gallantly ran forward and presented the ladies with bouquets of roses. We thought it a pretty and graceful act, but found later that it was to be paid for, like all pretty and graceful things in Italy; for when we came to settle for the wine, and the landlord wanted more than justice, he urged that he had presented the ladies with flowers,—yet he equally gave me his benediction when I refused to pay for his politeness.

"Now here," again said the patriarch in a solemn whisper, "you can see the Tarantella danced for two francs; whereas down at your inn, if you hire the dancers through your landlord, it will cost you five or six francs." The difference was tempting, and decided us in favour of an immediate Tarantella. The muletresses left their beasts to browse about the door of the inn, and came into the little public room, where were already the wife and sister of the landlord, and took their places *vis-à-vis*, while the landlord seized his tambourine and beat

from it a wild and lively measure. The women were barefooted and hoopless, and they gave us the Tarantella with all the beauty of natural movement and free floating drapery, and with all that splendid grace of pose which animates the antique statues and pictures of dancers. They swayed themselves in time with the music ; then, filled with its passionate impulse, advanced and retreated and whirled away ;— snapping their fingers above their heads, and looking over their shoulders with a gay and a laughing challenge to each other, they drifted through the ever-repeated figures of flight and wooing, and wove for us pictures of delight that remained upon the brain like the effect of long-pondered vivid colours, and still return to illumine and complete any representation of that indescribable dance. Heaven knows what peril there might have been in the beauty and grace of the pretty muletress but for the spectacle of her fat aunt, who, I must confess, could only burlesque some of her niece's airiest movements, and whose hard-bought buoyancy was at once pathetic and laughable. She earned her share of the spoils certainly, and she seemed glad when the dance was over, and went contentedly back to her mule.

The patriarch had early retired from the scene as from a vanity with which he was too familiar for enjoyment, and I found him, when the Tarantella was done, leaning on the curb of the precipitous rock immediately behind the inn, over which the Capriotes say Tiberius used to cast the victims of his pleasures after he was sated with them. These have taken their place in the insular imagination as Christian martyrs, though it is probable that the poor souls were anything but Nazarenes. It took a stone thrown from the brink of the rock twenty seconds to send back a response from the water below, and the depth was too dizzying to look into. So we looked instead toward Amalfi, across the Gulf of Salerno, and toward Naples, across her bay. On every hand the sea was flushed with sunset, and an unspeakable calm dwelt upon it, while the heights rising from it softened and softened in the distance, and withdrew themselves into dreams of ghostly solitude and phantom city. His late majesty the Emperor Tiberius is well known to have been a man of sentiment, and he may often have sought this spot to enjoy the evening hour. It was convenient to his palace, and he could here give a fillip to his jaded sensibilities by popping a boon

companion over the cliff, and thus enjoy the fine poetic contrast which his perturbed and horrible spirit afforded to that scene of innocence and peace. Later he may have come hither also, when lust failed, when all the lewd plays and devices of his fancy palled upon his senses, when sin had grown insipid, and even murder ceased to amuse, and his majesty uttered his despair to the Senate in that terrible letter : “ What to write to you, or how to write, I know not : and what not to write at this time, may all the gods and goddesses torment me more than I daily feel that I suffer if I do know.”

The poor patriarch was also a rascal in his small way, and he presently turned to me with a countenance full of cowardly trouble and base remorse. “ I pray you, little sir, not to tell the landlord below there that you have seen the Tarantella danced here ; for he has daughters and friends to dance it for strangers, and gets a deal of money by it. So, if he asks you to see it, do me the pleasure to say, lest he should take on (*pigliarsi*) with me about it : ‘ Thanks, but we saw the Tarantella at Pompeii ! ’ ” It was the last place in Italy where we were likely to have seen the Tarantella ; but these simple people are improvident in lying, as in everything else.

The patriarch had a curious spice of malice in him, which prompted him to speak evil of all, and to as many as he dared. After we had inspected the ruins of the emperor's villa, a clownish imbecile of a woman, professing to be the wife of the peasant who had made the excavations, came forth out of a cleft in the rock and received tribute of us—why, I do not know. The patriarch abetted the extortion, but Parthianly remarked, as we turned away, “Her husband ought to be here ; but this is a *festa*, and he is drinking and gaming in the village,” while the woman protested that he was sick at home. There was also a hermit living in great publicity among the ruins, and the patriarch did not spare him a sneering comment.¹ He had even a bad word for Tiberius, and reproached the emperor for throwing people over the cliff, though I think it a sport in which he would himself have liked to join. The only human creatures with whom he seemed to be in sympathy were the brigands of the main-

¹ This hermit, I have heard, was not brought up to the profession of anchorite, but was formerly a shoemaker, and, according to his own confession, abandoned his trade because he could better indulge a lethargic habit in the character of religious recluse.

land, of whom he spoke poetically as exiles and fugitives.

As for the palace of Tiberius, which we had come so far and so toilsomely to see, it must be confessed there was very little left of it. When that well-meaning but mistaken prince died, the Senate demolished his pleasure-houses at Capri, and left only those fragments of the beautiful brick masonry which yet remain, clinging indestructible to the rocks, and strewing the ground with rubbish. The recent excavations have discovered nothing besides the uninteresting foundations of the building, except a subterranean avenue leading from one part of the palace to another: this is walled with delicate brickwork, and exquisitely paved with white marble mosaic; and this was all that witnessed of the splendour of the wicked emperor. Nature, the all-forgetting, all-forgiving, that takes the red battle-field into her arms and hides it with blossom and harvest, could not remember his iniquity, greater than the multitudinous murder of war. The sea, which the despot's lust and fear had made so lonely, slept with the white sails of boats secure upon its breast: the little bays and inlets, the rocky clefts and woody dells, had forgotten their desecration; and the

gathering twilight, the sweetness of the garden-bordered pathway, and the serenity of the lonely landscape, helped us to doubt history.

We slowly returned to the inn by the road we had ascended, noting again the mansion of the surprising Englishman who had come to Capri for three months and had remained thirty years; passed through the darkness of the village,—dropped here and there with the vivid red of a lamp,—and so reached the inn at last, where we found the landlord ready to have the Tarantella danced for us. We framed a discreeter fiction than that prepared for us by the patriarch, and went in to dinner, where there were two Danish gentlemen in dispute with as many rogues of boatmen, who, having contracted to take them back that night to Naples, were now trying to fly their bargain and remain in Capri till the morrow. The Danes beat them, however, and then sat down to dinner, and to long stories of the imposture and villainy of the Italians. One of them chiefly bewailed himself that the day before, having unwisely eaten a dozen oysters without agreeing first with the oysterman upon the price, he had been obliged to pay this scamp's extortionate demand to the full, since he

was unable to restore him his property. We thought that something like this might have happened to an imprudent man in any country, but we did not the less join him in abusing the Italians—the purpose for which foreigners chiefly visit Italy.

II.

STANDING on the height among the ruins of Tiberius's palace, the patriarch had looked out over the waters, and predicted for the morrow the finest weather that had ever been known in that region ; but in spite of this prophecy the day dawned stormily, and at breakfast-time we looked out doubtfully on waves lashed by driving rain. The entrance to the Blue Grotto, to visit which we had come to Capri, is by a semicircular opening, some three feet in width and two feet in height, and just large enough to admit a small boat. One lies flat in the bottom of this, waits for the impulse of a beneficent wave, and is carried through the mouth of the cavern, and rescued from it in like manner by some receding billow. When the wind is in the wrong quarter, it is impossible to enter the grotto at all ; and we waited till nine o'clock for the storm to abate before we ventured forth. In the meantime one of

the Danish gentlemen, who—after assisting his companion to compel the boatmen to justice the night before—had stayed at Capri, and had risen early to see the grotto, returned from it, and we besieged him with a hundred questions concerning it. But he preserved the wise silence of the boy who goes in to see the six-legged calf, and comes out impervious to the curiosity of all the boys who are doubtful whether the monster is worth their money. Our Dane would merely say that it was now possible to visit the Blue Grotto ; that he had seen it ; that he was glad he *had* seen it. As to its blueness, Messieurs—yes, it is blue. *C'est à dire . . .*

The ladies had been amusing themselves with a perusal of the hotel register, and the notes of admiration or disgust with which the different sojourners at the inn had filled it. As a rule, the English people found fault with the poor little hostelry and the French people praised it. Commander Joshing and Lieutenant Prattent, R.N., of the former nation, ‘were cheated by the donkey-women, and thought themselves extremely fortunate to have escaped with their lives from the effects of Capri vintage. The landlord was an old Cossack.’ On the other hand, we read, “J. Cruttard, homme de lettres, a

passé quinze jours ici, et n'a eu que des félicités du patron de cet hôtel et de sa famille." Cheerful man of letters ! His good-natured record will keep green a name little known to literature. Who are G. Bradshaw, Duke of New York, and Signori Jones and Andrews, Hereditary Princes of the United States ? Their patrician names followed the titles of several English nobles in the register. But that which most interested the ladies in this record was the warning of a terrified British matron against any visit to the Blue Grotto except in the very calmest weather. The British matron penned her caution after an all but fatal experience. The ladies read it aloud to us, and announced that for themselves they would be contented with pictures of the Blue Grotto and our account of its marvels.

On the beach below the hotel lay the small boats of the guides to the Blue Grotto, and we descended to take one of them. The fixed rate is a franc for each person. The boatmen wanted five francs for each of us. We explained that although not indigenous to Capri, or even Italy, we were not of the succulent growth of travellers, and would not be eaten. We retired to our vantage-ground on the heights. The guides called us to the

beach again. They would take us for three francs apiece, or say six francs for both of us. We withdrew furious to the heights again, where we found honest Antonino, who did us the pleasure to yell to his fellow-scoundrels on the beach, " You had better take these signori for a just price. They are going to the syndic to complain of you." At which there arose a lamentable outcry among the boatmen, and they called with one voice for us to come down and go for a franc apiece. This fable teaches that common carriers are rogues everywhere ; but that whereas we are helpless in their hands at home, we may bully them into rectitude in Italy, where they are afraid of the law.

We had scarcely left the landing of the hotel in the boat of the patriarch—for I need hardly say he was first and most rapacious of the plundering crew—when we found ourselves in very turbulent waters, in the face of mighty bluffs, rising inaccessible from the sea. Here and there, where their swarthy fronts were softened with a little verdure, goat-paths wound up and down among the rocks ; and midway between the hotel and the grotto, in a sort of sheltered nook, we saw the Roman masonry of certain antique baths—baths of Augustus, says Valery ;

baths of Tiberius, say the Capriotes, zealous for the honour of their infamous hero. Howbeit, this was all we saw on the way to the Blue Grotto. Every moment the waves rose higher, emulous of the bluffs, which would not have afforded a foothold, or anything to cling to, had we been upset and washed against them—and we began to talk of the immortality of the soul. As we neared the grotto, the patriarch entertained us with stories of the perilous adventures of people who insisted upon entering it in stormy weather,—especially of a French painter who had been imprisoned in it four days, and kept alive only on rum, which the patriarch supplied him, swimming into the grotto with a bottleful at a time. “And behold us arrived, gentlemen!” said he, as he brought the boat skilfully around in front of the small semicircular opening at the base of the lofty bluff. We lie flat on the bottom of the boat, and complete the immersion of that part of our clothing which the driving torrents of rain had spared. The wave of destiny rises with us upon its breast—sinks, and we are inside of the Blue Grotto. Not so much blue as grey, however, and the water about the mouth of it green rather than azure. They say that on a sunny day

both the water and the roof of the cavern are of the vividest cerulean tint—and I saw the grotto so represented in the windows of the paint-shops at Naples. But to my own experience it did not differ from other caves in colour or form : there was the customary clamminess in the air ; the sound of dropping water ; the sense of dull and stupid solitude, —a little relieved in this case by the mighty music of the waves breaking against the rocks outside. The grot is not great in extent, and the roof in the rear shelves gradually down to the water. Valery says that some remains of a gallery have caused the supposition that the grotto was once the scene of Tiberius's pleasures ; and the Prussian painter who discovered the cave was led to seek it by something he had read of a staircase by which Barbarossa used to descend into a subterranean retreat from the town of Anacapri on the mountain-top. The slight fragment of ruin which we saw in one corner of the cave might be taken in confirmation of both theories ; but the patriarch attributed the work to Barbarossa, being probably tired at last of hearing Tiberius so much talked about.

We returned, soaked and disappointed, to the hotel, where we found Antonino very

doubtful about the possibility of getting back that day to Sorrento, and disposed, when pooh-poohed out of the notion of bad weather, to revive the fiction of a prohibitory consul. He was staying in Capri at our expense, and the honest fellow would willingly have spent a fortnight there.

We summoned the landlord to settlement, and he came with all his household to present the account,—each one full of visible longing, yet restrained from asking *buona-mano* by a strong sense of previous contract. It was a deadly struggle with them, but they conquered themselves, and blessed us as we departed. The pretty muletress took leave of us on the beach, and we set sail for Sorrento, the ladies crouching in the bottom of the boat, and taking their sea-sickness in silence. As we drew near the beautiful town, we saw how it lay on a plateau, at the foot of the mountains, but high above the sea. Antonino pointed out to us the house of Tasso,—in which the novelist Cooper also resided when in Sorrento,—a white house not handsomer nor uglier than the rest, with a terrace looking out over the water. The bluffs are pierced by numerous arched caverns, as I have said, giving shelter to the fishermen's boats, and here and there a

devious stairway mounts to their crests. Up one of these we walked, noting how in the house above us the people, with that puerility usually mixed with the Italian love of beauty, had placed painted busts of terra-cotta in the windows to simulate persons looking out. There was nothing to blame in the breakfast we found ready at the Hotel Rispoli ; and as for the grove of slender, graceful orange-trees in the midst of which the hotel stood, and which had lavished the fruit in every direction on the ground, why, I would willingly give for it all the currant-bushes, with their promises of jelly and jam, on which I gaze at this moment.

Antonino attended us to our carriage when we went away. He had kept us all night at Capri, it is true, and he had brought us in at the end for a prodigious *buonamano* ; yet I cannot escape the conviction that he parted from us with an unfulfilled purpose of greater plunder, and I have a compassion, which I here declare, for the strangers who fell next into his hands. He was good enough at the last moment to say that his name, Silver-Eye, was a nickname given him according to a custom of the Sorrentines ; and he made us a farewell bow that could not be bought in America for money.

At the station of Castellamare sat a curious cripple on the stones,—a man with little, short, withered legs, and a pleasant face. He showed us the ticket-office, and wanted nothing for the politeness. After we had been in the waiting-room for a brief time, he came swinging himself in upon his hands, followed by another person, who, when the cripple had planted himself finally and squarely on the ground, whipped out a tape from his pocket and took his measure for a suit of clothes, the cripple twirling and twisting himself about in every way for the tailor's convenience. Nobody was surprised or amused at the sight, and when his measure was thus publicly taken, the cripple gravely swung himself out as he had swung himself in.

XI.

THE PROTESTANT RAGGED SCHOOLS AT
NAPLES.

I HAD the pleasure one day of visiting nearly all the free schools which the wise philanthropy of the Protestant residents of Naples has established in that city. The schools had a peculiar interest for me, because I had noticed (in an uncareful fashion enough, no doubt) the great changes which had taken place in Italy under its new national government, and was desirous to see for myself the sort of progress the Italians of the South were making in avenues so long closed to them. I believe I have no mania for missionaries ; I have heard of the converted Jew-and-a-half, and I have thought it a good joke ; but I cannot help offering a very cordial homage to the truth that the missionaries are doing a vast deal of good in Naples, where they are not only spreading the gospel, but the spelling-book, the arithmetic, and the geography.

It is not to be understood from the word *missionaries*, that this work is done by men especially sent from England or America to perform it. The free Protestant schools in Naples are conducted under the auspices of the Evangelical Aid Committee,—composed of members of the English Church, the Swiss Church, and the Presbyterian Church; the President of this committee is Dr. Strange, an Englishman, and the Treasurer is Mr. Rogers, the American banker. The missionaries in Naples, therefore, are men who have themselves found out their work and appointed themselves to do it. The gentleman by whose kindness I was permitted to visit the schools was one of these men,—the Rev. Mr. Buscarlet, the pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Naples, a Swiss by birth, who had received his education chiefly in Scotland.

He accompanied me to the different schools, and as we walked up the long Toledo, and threaded our way through the sprightly Neapolitan crowd, he told me of the origin of the schools, and of the peculiar difficulties encountered in their foundation and maintenance. They are no older than the union of Naples with the Kingdom of Italy, when toleration of Protestantism was

decreed by law ; and from the first, their managers proceeded upon a principle of perfect openness and candour with the parents who wished to send their children to them. They announced that the children would be taught certain branches of learning, and that the whole Bible would be placed in their hands, to be studied and understood. In spite of this declaration of the Protestant character of the schools, the parents of the children were so anxious to secure them the benefits of education, that they willingly ran the risk of their becoming heretics. They were principally people of the lower classes,—labourers, hackmen, fishermen, domestics, and very small shopkeepers, but occasionally among them were parents able to send their children to other schools, yet preferring the thorough and conscientious system practised in these. So the children came, and, thanks to the peaceful, uncombative nature of Italian boys, who get on with much less waylaying and thumping and bullying than boys of northern blood, they have not been molested by their companions who still live the wild life of the streets, and they have only once suffered through interference of the priests. On complaint to the authorities the wrong was

promptly redressed, and was not again inflicted. Of course these poor little people, picked up out of the vileness and ignorance of a city that had suffered for ages the most degrading oppression, are by no means regenerate yet, but there seems to be great hope for them. Now at least they are taught a reasonable and logical morality—and who can tell what wonders the novel instruction may not work? They learn for the first time that it is a foolish shame to lie and cheat, and it would scarcely be surprising if some of them were finally persuaded that Honesty is the best Policy—a maxim that few Italians believe. And here lies the trouble,—in the unfathomable, disheartening duplicity of the race. The children are not quarrelsome, nor cruel, nor brutal; but the servile defect of falsehood fixed by long generations of slavery in the Italians, is almost ineradicable. The fault is worse in Naples than elsewhere in Italy; but how bad it is everywhere, not merely travellers, but all residents in Italy, must bear witness.

The first school which we visited was a girls' school, in which some forty-four little women of all ages, from four to fifteen years, were assembled under the charge of a young

Corfute girl, an Italian Protestant, who had delegated her authority to different children under her. The small maidens gathered around their chiefs in groups, and read from the book in which they were studying when we appeared. Some allowance must be made for difference of the languages, Italian being logically spelled and easily pronounced ; but I certainly never heard American children of their age read nearly so well. They seemed also to have a lively understanding of what they read, and to be greatly interested in the scriptural stories of which their books were made up. They repeated verses from the Bible, and stanzas of poetry, all very eagerly and prettily. As bashfulness is scarcely known to their race, they had no hesitation in showing off their accomplishments before a stranger, and seemed quite delighted with his applause. They were not particularly quiet ; perhaps with young Neapolitans that would be impossible. I saw their copy-books, in which the writing was very good (I am sure the printer would like mine to be as legible), and the books were kept neat and clean, as were the hands and faces of the children. Taking the children as one goes in the streets of Naples, it would require a day

perhaps to find as many clean ones as I saw in these schools, where cleanliness is resolutely insisted upon. Many of the children were ragged ; here and there was one hideous with *ophthalmia* ; but there was not a clouded countenance, nor a dirty hand among them. We should have great hopes for a nation of which the children can be taught to wash themselves.

There were fourteen pupils in the boys' superior school, where geography, mathematics, linear drawing, French, Italian history, and ancient history were taught. A brief examination showed the boys to be well up in their studies ;—indeed they furnished some recondite information about Baffin's Bay for which I should not myself have liked to be called on suddenly. Their drawing-books were prodigies of neatness, and betrayed that aptness for form and facility of execution which are natural to the Italians. Some of these boys had been in the schools nearly three years ; they were nearly all of the class which must otherwise have grown up to hopeless vagabondage ; but here they were receiving gratis an education that would fit them for employments wherein trained intellectual capacity is required. If their education went no higher

than this, what an advance it would be upon their original condition !

In the room devoted to boys of lower grade, I entangled myself in difficulties with a bright-eyed young gentleman, whom I asked if he liked Italian history better than ancient history. He said he liked the latter, especially that of the Romans, much better. "Why, that is strange. I should think an Italian boy would like Italian history best." "But were not the Romans also Italians, Signore?" I blush to say that I basely sneaked out of this trouble by answering that they were not like the Italians of the present day,—whatever that meant. But indeed all these young persons were startlingly quick with their information, and, knowing that I knew very little on any subject with certainty, I think I was wise to refuse all offers to examine them in their studies.

We left this school, and returned to the Toledo by one of these wonderful little side streets already mentioned, which are for ever tumultuous with the oddest Neapolitan life—with men quarrelling themselves purple over small quantities of fish—with asses braying loud and clear above their discord—with women roasting pine-cones at

charcoal fires—with children in the agonies of having their hair combed—with degraded poultry and homeless dogs—with fruit-stands and green groceries, and the little edifices of ecclesiastical architecture for the sale of lemonade—with wandering bag-pipers, and herds of nonchalant goats—with horses, and grooms currying them—and over all, from vast heights of balcony, with people lazily hanging upon rails and looking down on the riot. Re-entering the stream of the Toledo, it carried us almost to the Museo Borbonico before we again struck aside into one of the smaller streets, whence we climbed quite to the top of one of those incredibly high Neapolitan houses. Here, crossing an open terrace on the roof, we visited three small rooms, in which there were altogether some hundred boys in the first stages of reclamation. They were under the immediate superintendence of Mr. Buscarlet, and he seemed to feel the fondest interest in them. Indeed, there was sufficient reason for this: up to a certain point, the Neapolitan children learn so rapidly and willingly that it can hardly be other than a pleasure to teach them. After this, their zeal flags; they know enough; and their parents and friends, far more ignorant

than they, are perfectly satisfied with their progress. Then the difficulties of their teachers begin; but here, in these lowest grade schools, they had not yet begun. The boys were still eager to learn, and were ardently following the lead of their teachers. They were little fellows, nearly all, and none of them had been in school more than a year and a half, while some had been there only three or four months. They rose up with "*Buon giorno, signori,*" as we entered, and could hardly be persuaded to lapse back to the duties of life during our stay. They had very good faces indeed, for the most part, and even the vicious had intellectual brightness. Just and consistent usage has the best influence on them; and one boy was pointed out as quite docile and manageable, whose parents had given him up as incorrigible before he entered the school. As it was, there was something almost pathetic in his good behaviour, as being possible to him, but utterly alien to his instincts. The boys of these schools seldom play truant, and they are never severely beaten in school; when quite intractable, notice is given to their parents, and they usually return in a more docile state. It sometimes happens that the boys are taken away by their

parents, from one motive or another; but they find their way back again, and are received as if nothing had happened.

The teacher in the first room here is a handsome young Calabrian, with the gentlest face and manner,—one of the most efficient teachers under Mr. Buscarlet. The boys had out their Bibles when we entered, and one after another read passages to us. There were children of seven, eight, and nine years, who had been in the school only three months, and who read any part of their Bibles with facility and correctness; of course, before coming to school they had not known one letter from another. The most accomplished scholar was a youngster named Saggiomo, who had received eighteen months' schooling. He was consequently very quick indeed, and wanted to answer all the hard questions put to the other boys. In fact, all of them were ready enough, and there was a great deal of writhing and snapping of fingers among those who longed to answer some hesitator's question—just as you see in schools at home. They were examined in geography, and then in Bible history,—particularly Joseph's story. They responded in chorus to all demands on this part of study, and could hardly be quieted

sufficiently to give Saggiomo's little brother (aged five) a chance to tell why Joseph's brethren sold him. As soon as he could be heard he piped out : "*Perchè Giuseppe areva dei sogni!*" (Because Joseph had dreams.) It was not exactly the right answer, but nobody laughed at the little fellow, though they all roared out in correction when permitted.

In the next room, boys somewhat older were examined in Italian history, and responded correctly and promptly. They were given a sum which they performed in a miraculously short time ; and their copy-books, when shown, were equally creditable to them. Their teacher was a Bolognese,—a naturalised Swiss,—who had been a soldier, and who maintained strict discipline among his irregulars, without, however, any perceptible terrorism.

The amount of work these teachers accomplish in a day is incredible : the boys' school opens at eight in the morning and closes at four, with intermission of an hour at noon. Then in the evening the same men teach a school for adults, and on Sunday have their classes in the Sunday schools. And this the whole year round. Their pay is not great, being about twenty dollars a

month, and they are evidently not wholly self-interested from this fact. The amount of good they accomplish under the direction of their superiors is in proportion to the work done. To appreciate it, the reader must consider that they take the children of the most ignorant and degraded of all the Italians ; that they cause them to be washed corporeally, first of all, and then set about cleansing them morally ; and, having cleared away as much of the inherited corruption of ages as possible, they begin to educate them in the various branches of learning. There is no direct proselyting in the schools, but the Bible is the first study, and the children are constantly examined in it ; and the result is at least not superstition. The advance upon the old condition of things is incalculably great ; for till the revolution under Garibaldi in 1860, the schools of Naples were all in the hands of the priests or their creatures, and the little learning there imparted was as dangerous as it could well be made. Now these schools are free, the children are honestly and thoroughly taught, and, if they are not directly instructed in Protestantism, are at least instructed to associate religion with morality, probably for the first time in their

lives. Too much credit cannot be given to the Italian Government, which has acted in such good faith with the men engaged in this work, protecting them from all interruption and persecution ; but after all, the great praise is due to their own wise, unflagging zeal. They have worked unostentatiously, making no idle attacks on time-honoured prejudices, but still having a purpose of enlightenment which they frankly avowed. The people whom they seek to benefit judge them by their works, and the result is that they have quite as much before them as they can do. Their discouragements are great. The day's teaching is often undone at home ; the boys forget as aptly as they learn ; and, from the fact that only the baser feelings of fear and interest have ever been appealed to before in the Neapolitans, they have often to build in treacherous places without foundation of good faith or gratitude. Embarrassments for want of adequate funds are sometimes felt also. But no one can study their operations without feeling that success must attend their efforts, with honour to them, and with inestimable benefits to the generation which shall one day help to govern free Italy.

XII.

BETWEEN ROME AND NAPLES.

ONE day it became plain even to our reluctance that we could not stay in Naples for ever, and the next morning we took the train for Rome. The Villa Reale put on its most alluring charm to him that ran down before breakfast to thrid once more its pathways bordered with palms and fountains and statues ; the bay beside it purpled and twinkled in the light that made silver of the fishermen's sails ; far away rose Vesuvius with his nightcap of mist still hanging about his shoulders ; all around rang and rattled Naples. The city was never so fair before, nor could ever have been so hard to leave ; and at the last moment the landlord of the Hotel Washington must needs add a supreme pang by developing into a poet, and presenting me with a copy of a comedy he had written. The reader who has received at parting from the gentlemanly proprietor of one of

our palatial hotels his "Ode on the Steam Elevator," will conceive of the shame and regret with which I thought of having upbraided our landlord about our rooms, of having stickled at small preliminaries concerning our contract for board, and for having altogether treated him as one of the uninspired. Let me do him the tardy justice to say that he keeps, after the *Stella d'Oro* at Ferrara, the best hotel in Italy, and that his comedy was really very sprightly. It is no small thing to know how to keep a hotel, as we know, and a poet who does it ought to have a double acclaim.

Nobody who cares to travel with decency and comfort can take the second-class cars on the road between Naples and Rome, though these are perfectly good everywhere else in Italy. The Papal city makes her influence felt for shabbiness and uncleanliness wherever she can, and her management seems to prevail on this railway. A glance into the second-class cars reconciled us to the first-class,—which in themselves were bad,—and we took our places almost contentedly.

The road passed through the wildest country we had seen in Italy; and pre-

sently a rain began to fall, and made it drearier than ever. The land was much grown up with thickets of hazel, and was here and there sparsely wooded with oaks. Under these, hogs were feeding upon the acorns, and the wet swineherds were steaming over fires built at their roots. In some places the forest was quite dense; in other places it fell entirely away, and left the rocky hill-sides bare, and solitary but for the sheep that nibbled at the scanty grass, and the shepherds that leaned upon their crooks and motionlessly stared at us as we rushed by. As we drew near Rome, the scenery grew lonelier yet; the land rose into desolate, sterile, stony heights, without a patch of verdure on their nakedness, and at last abruptly dropped into the gloomy expanse of the Campagna.

The towns along the route had little to interest us in their looks, though at San Germano we caught a glimpse of the famous old convent of Monte-Cassino, perched aloft on its cliff, and looking like a part of the rock on which it was built. Fancy now loves to climb that steep acclivity, and wander through the many-volumed library of the ancient Benedictine retreat, and on the whole finds it less fatiguing, and certainly

less expensive, than actual ascent and acquaintance with the monastery would have been. Two Croatian priests, who shared our compartment of the railway carriage, first drew our notice to the place, and were enthusiastic about it for many miles after it was out of sight. What gentle and pleasant men they were, and how hard it seemed that they should be priests and Croats! They told us all about the city of Spalato, where they lived, and gave us such a glowing account of Dalmatian poets and poetry that we began to doubt at last if the seat of literature were not somewhere on the east coast of the Adriatic; and I hope we left them the impression that the literary centre of the world was not a thousand miles from the horse-car office in Harvard Square.

Here and there repairs were going forward on the railroad, and most of the labourers were women. They were straight and handsome girls, and moved with a stately grace under the baskets of earth balanced on their heads. Brave black eyes they had, such as love to look and to be looked at; they were not in the least hurried by their work, but desisted from it to gaze at the passengers whenever the train stopped.

They all wore their beautiful peasant costume,—the square white linen head-dress falling to the shoulders, the crimson bodice, and the red scant skirt; and how they contrived to keep themselves so clean at their work, and to look so spectacular in it all, remains one of the many Italian mysteries.

Another of these mysteries we beheld in the little beggar-boy at Isoletta. He stood at the corner of the station quite mute and motionless during our pause, and made no sign of supplication or entreaty. He let his looks beg for him. He was perfectly beautiful and exceedingly picturesque. Where his body was not quite naked, his jacket and trousers hung in shreds and points; his long hair grew through the top of his hat, and fell over like a plume. Nobody could resist him; people ran out of the cars, at the risk of being left behind, to put coppers into the little dirty hand held languidly out to receive them. The boy thanked none, smiled on none, but looked curiously and cautiously at all, with the quick perception and the illogical conclusions of his class and race. As we started he did not move, but remained in his attitude of listless tranquillity. As we

glanced back, the mystery of him seemed to be solved for a moment: he would stand there till he grew up into a graceful, prayerful, pitiless brigand, and then he would rend from travel the tribute now so freely given him. But after all, though his future seemed clear, and he appeared the type of a strange and hardly reclaimable people, he was not quite a solution of the Neapolitan puzzle.

XIII.

ROMAN PEARLS.

I.

THE first view of the ruins in the Forum brought a keen sense of disappointment. I knew that they could only be mere fragments and rubbish, but I was not prepared to find them so. I learned that I had all along secretly hoped for some dignity of neighbourhood, some affectionate solicitude on the part of Nature to redeem these works of Art from the destruction that had befallen them. But in hollows below the level of the dirty cow-field, wandered over by evil-eyed buffaloes, and obscenely defiled by wild beasts of men, there stood here an arch, there a pillar, yonder a cluster of columns crowned by a bit of frieze ; and yonder again a fragment of temple, half-gorged by the façade of a hideous Renaissance church ; then a height of vaulted brickwork, and, leading on to the Coliseum, another arch, and then incoherent columns overthrown

and mixed with dilapidated walls—mere phonographic consonants, dumbly representing the past, out of which all vocal glory had departed. The Coliseum itself does not much better express a certain phase of Roman life than does the Arena at Verona; it is larger only to the foot-rule, and it seemed not grander otherwise, while it is vastly more ruinous. Even the Pantheon failed to impress me at first sight, though I found myself disposed to return to it again and again, and to be more and more affected by it.

Modern Rome appeared, first and last, hideous. It is the least interesting town in Italy, and the architecture is hopelessly ugly—especially the architecture of the churches. The Papal city contrives at the beginning to hide the Imperial city from your thought, as it hides it in such a great degree from your eye, and old Rome only occurs to you in a sort of stupid wonder over the depth at which it is buried. I confess that I was glad to get altogether away from it after a first look at the ruins in the Forum, and to take refuge in the Conservatorio delle Mendicanti, where we were charged to see the little Virginia G. The Conservatorio, though a charitable in-

stitution, is not so entirely meant for mendicants as its name would imply, but none of the many young girls there were the children of rich men. They were often enough of parentage actually hungry and ragged, but they were often also the daughters of honest poor folk, who paid a certain sum toward their maintenance and education in the Conservatorio. Such was the case with little Virginia, whose father was at Florence, doubly impeded from seeing her by the fact that he had fought against the Pope for the Republic of 1848, and by the other fact that he had since wrought the Pope a yet deadlier injury by turning Protestant.

Ringing a garrulous bell that continued to jingle some time after we were admitted, we found ourselves in a sort of reception-room, of the general quality of a cellar, and in the presence of a portress who was perceptibly preserved from mould only by the great pot of coals that stood in the centre of the place. Some young girls, rather pretty than not, attended the ancient woman, and kindly acted as the ear-trumpet through which our wishes were conveyed to her mind. The Conservatorio was not, so far, as conventional as we had imagined it ; but as the gentleman

of the party was strongly guarded by female friends, and asked at once to see the Superior, he concluded that there was, perhaps, something so unusually reassuring to the recluses in his appearance and manner that they had not thought it necessary to behave very rigidly. It later occurred to this gentleman that the promptness with which the pretty mendicants procured him an interview with the Superior had a flavour of self-interest in it, and that he who came to the Conservatorio in the place of a father might have been for a moment ignorantly viewed as a yet dearer and tenderer possibility. From whatever danger there was in this error the Superior soon appeared to rescue him, and we were invited into a more ceremonious apartment on the first floor, and the little Virginia was sent for. The visit of the strangers caused a tumult and interest in the quiet old Conservatorio of which it is hard to conceive now, and the excitement grew tremendous when it appeared that the signori were Americani and Protestanti. We imparted a savour of novelty and importance to Virginia herself, and when she appeared, the Superior and her assistant looked at her with no small curiosity and awe, of which the little maiden instantly became conscious,

and began to take advantage. Accompanying us over the building and through the grounds, she cut her small friends wherever she met them, and was not more than respectful to the assistant.

It was from an instinct of hospitality that we were shown the Conservatorio, and instructed in regard to all its purposes. We saw the neat dormitories with their battalions of little white beds ; the kitchen with its gigantic coppers for boiling broth, and the refectory with the smell of the frugal dinners of generations of mendicants in it. The assistant was very proud of the neatness of everything, and was glad to talk of that, or, indeed, anything else. It appeared that the girls were taught reading, writing, and plain sewing when they were young, and that the Conservatorio was chiefly sustained by pious contributions and bequests. Any lingering notion of the conventional character of the place was dispelled by the assistant's hurrying to say, "And when we can get the poor things well married, we are glad to do so."

"But how does any one ever see them?"

"Eh ! well, that is easily managed. Once a month we dress the marriageable girls in their best, and take them for a walk in the

street. If an honest young man falls in love with one of them going by, he comes to the Superior, and describes her as well as he can, and demands to see her. She is called, and if both are pleased, the marriage is arranged. You see it is a very simple affair."

And there was, to the assistant's mind, nothing odd in the whole business, insomuch that I felt almost ashamed of marvelling at it.

Issuing from the back-door of the convent, we ascended by stairs and gateways into garden spaces, chiefly planted with turnips and the like poor but respectable vegetables, and curiously adorned with fragments of antique statuary, and here and there a fountain in a corner, trickling from moss-grown rocks, and falling into a trough of travertine, about the feet of some poor old goddess or Virtue who had forgotten what her name was.

Once, the assistant said, speaking as if the thing had been within her recollection, though it must have been centuries before, the antiquities of the Conservatorio were much more numerous and striking; but they were now removed to the different museums. Nevertheless they had still a beautiful prospect left, which we were wel-

come to enjoy if we would follow her ; and presently, to our surprise, we stepped from the garden upon the roof of the Temple of Peace. The assistant had not boasted without reason : away before us stretched the Campagna, a level waste, and empty but for the umbrella-palms that here and there waved like black plumes upon it, and for the arched lengths of the aqueducts that seemed to stalk down from the ages across the melancholy expanse like files of giants, with now and then a ruinous gap in the line, as if one had fallen out weary by the way. The city all around us glittered asleep in the dim December sunshine, and far below us,—on the length of the Forum over which the Appian Way stretched from the Capitoline Hill under the Arch of Septimius Severus and the Arch of Titus to the Arch of Constantine, leaving the Coliseum on the left, and losing itself in the foliage of the suburbs,—the Past seemed struggling to emerge from the ruins, and to reshape and animate itself anew. The effort was more successful than that which we had helped the Past to make when standing on the level of the Forum ; but Antiquity must have been painfully conscious of the incongruity of the red-legged Zouaves wandering over the grass, and of

the bewildered tourists trying to make her out with their *Murrays*.

In a day or two after this we returned again to our Conservatorio, where we found that the excitement created by our first visit had been kept fully alive by the events attending the photographing of Virginia for her father. Not only Virginia was there to receive us, but her grandmother also—an old, old woman, dumb through some infirmity of age, who could only weep and smile in token of her content. I think she had but a dim idea, after all, of what went on beyond the visible fact of Virginia's photograph, and that she did not quite understand how we could cause it to be taken for her son. She was deeply compassionated by the Superior, who rendered her pity with a great deal of gesticulation, casting up her eyes, shrugging her shoulders, and sighing grievously. But the assistant's cheerfulness could not be abated even by the spectacle of extreme age: and she made the most of the whole occasion, recounting with great minuteness all the incidents of the visit to the photographer's, and running to get the dress Virginia sat in, that we might see how exactly it was given in the picture. Then she gave us much discourse concern-

ing the Conservatorio and its usages, and seemed not to wish us to think that life there was altogether eventless. "Here we have a little amusement also," she said. "The girls have their relatives to visit them sometimes, and then in the evening they dance. Oh, they enjoy themselves! I am half old (*mezzo-vecchia*). I am done with these things. But for youth, always kept down, something lively is wanted."

When we took leave of these simple folks, we took leave of almost the whole natural and unprepared aspect of Italian life which we were to see in Rome; but we did not know this at the time.

II.

INDEED, it seems to me that all moisture of romance and adventure has been well-nigh sucked out of travel in Italy, and that compared with the old time, when the happy wayfarer journeyed by vettura through the innumerable little states of the Peninsula,—halted every other mile to show his passport, and robbed by customs officers in every colour of shabby uniform and every variety of cocked hat,—the present railroad period is one of but stale and insipid flavour. Much of local life and colour remains, of course;

but the hurried traveller sees little of it, and, passed from one grand hotel to another, without material change in the cooking or the methods of extortion, he might nearly as well remain at Paris. The Italians, who live to so great extent by the travel through their country, learn our abominable languages and minister to our detestable comfort and propriety, till we have slight chance to know them as we once could,—musical, picturesque, and full of sweet, natural knaveries, graceful falsehood, and all uncleanness. Rome really belongs to the Anglo-Saxon nations, and the Pope and the past seem to be carried on entirely for our diversion. Everything is systematised as thoroughly as in a museum where the objects are all ticketed ; and our prejudices are consulted even down to alms-giving. Honest Beppo is gone from the steps in the Piazza di Spagna, and now the beggars are labelled like policemen, with an immense plate bearing the image of St. Peter, so that you may know you give to a worthy person when you bestow charity on one of them, and not, alas ! to some abandoned impostor, as in former days. One of these highly recommended mendicants gave the last finish to the system, and begged of us in English !

No custodian will answer you, if he can help it, in the Italian which he speaks so exquisitely, preferring to speak bad French instead, and in all the shops on the Corso the English tongue is *de rigueur*.

After our dear friends at the Conservatorio, I think we found one of the most simple and interesting of Romans in the monk who showed us the Catacombs of St. Sebastian. These catacombs, he assured us, were not restored like those of St. Calixtus, but were just as the martyrs left them ; and, as I do not remember to have read anywhere that they are formed merely of long, low, narrow, wandering under-ground passages, lined on either side with tombs in tiers like berths on a steamer, and expanding here and there into small square chambers, bearing the traces of ancient frescoes, and evidently used as chapels,—I venture to offer the information here. The reader is to keep in his mind a darkness broken by the light of wax tapers, a close smell, and crookedness and narrowness, or he cannot realise the catacombs as they are in fact. Our monkish guide, before entering the passage leading from the floor of the church to the tombs, in which there was still some “fine small dust” of the martyrs, warned us that to

touch it was to incur the penalty of excommunication, and then gently craved pardon for having mentioned the fact. But, indeed, it was only to persons who showed a certain degree of reverence that these places were now exhibited ; for some Protestants who had been permitted there had stolen handfuls of the precious ashes, merely to throw away. I assured him that I thought them beasts to do it ; and I was afterwards puzzled to know what should attract their wantonness in the remnants of mortality, hardly to be distinguished from the common earth out of which the catacombs were dug.

III.

RETURNING to the church above we found, kneeling before one of the altars, two pilgrims,—a man and a woman. The latter was habited in a nunlike dress of black, and the former in a long pilgrim's coat of coarse blue stuff. He bore a pilgrim's staff in his hand, and showed under his close hood a fine, handsome, reverent face, full of a sort of tender awe, touched with the pathos of penitence. In attendance upon the two was a dapper little silk-hatted man, with rogue so plainly written in his devotional countenance that I was not surprised to be told

that he was a species of spiritual *valet de place*, whose occupation it was to attend pilgrims on their tour to the Seven Churches at which these devotees pray in Rome, and there to direct their orisons and join in them.

It was not to the pilgrims, but to the heretics that the monk now uncovered the precious marble slab on which Christ stood when He met Peter flying from Rome and turned him back. You are shown the prints of the divine feet, which the conscious stone received and keeps for ever ; and near at hand is one of the arrows with which St. Sebastian was shot. We looked at these things critically, having to pay for the spectacle ; but the pilgrims and their guide were all faith and wonder.

I remember seeing nothing else so finely superstitious at Rome. In a chapel near the Church of St. John Lateran are, as is well known, the marble steps which once belonged to Pilate's house, and which the Saviour is said to have ascended when He went to trial before Pilate. The steps are protected against the wear and tear of devotion by a stout casing of wood, and they are constantly covered with penitents, who ascend and descend them upon their

knees. Most of the pious people whom I saw in this act were children, and the boys enjoyed it with a good deal of giggling, as a very amusing feat. Some old and haggard women gave the scene all the dignity which it possessed ; but certain well-dressed ladies and gentlemen were undeniably awkward and absurd, and I was led to doubt if there were not an incompatibility between the *abandon* of simple faith and the respectability of good clothes.

IV.

IN all other parts of Italy one hears constant talk among travellers of the malaria at Rome, and, having seen a case of Roman fever, I know it is a thing not to be trifled with. But in Rome itself the malaria is laughed at by the foreign residents, — who, nevertheless, go out of the city in midsummer. The Romans, to the number of a hundred thousand or so, remain there the whole year round, and I am bound to say I never saw a healthier, robuster-looking population. The cheeks of the French soldiers, too, whom we met at every turn, were red as their trousers, and they seemed to flourish on the imputed unwholesomeness of the atmosphere. All at Rome are united

in declaring that the fever exists at Naples, and that sometimes those who have taken it there come and die in Rome, in order to give the city a bad name ; and I think this very likely.

Rome is certainly dirty, however, though there is a fountain in every square, and you are never out of the sound of falling water. The Corso and some of the principal streets do not so much impress you with their filth as with their dulness ; but that part of the city where some of the most memorable relics of antiquity are to be found is unimaginably vile. The least said of the state of the archways of the Coliseum the soonest mended ; and I have already spoken of the Forum. The streets near the Theatre of Pompey are almost impassable, and the so-called House of Rienzi is a stable, fortified against approach by a *fossé* of excrement. A noisome smell seems to be esteemed the most appropriate offering to the memory of ancient Rome, and I am not sure that the moderns are mistaken in this. In the rascal streets in the neighbourhood of the most august ruins, the people turn round to stare at the stranger as he passes them ; they are all dirty, and his decency must be no less a surprise to them than the neatness of the French soldiers amid

all the filth is a puzzle to him. We wandered about a long time in such places one day, looking for the Tarpeian Rock, less for Tarpeia's sake than for the sake of Miriam and Donatello and the Model. There are two Tarpeian rocks, between which the stranger takes his choice ; and we must have chosen the wrong one, for it seemed but a shallow gulf compared to that in our fancy. We were somewhat disappointed ; but then Niagara disappoints one ; and as for Mont Blanc . . .

V.

It is worth while for every one who goes to Rome to visit the Church of St. Peter ; but it is scarcely worth while for me to describe it, or for every one to go up into the bronze globe on the top of the cupola. In fact, this is a great labour, and there is nothing to be seen from the crevices in the ball which cannot be far more comfortably seen from the roof of the church below.

The companions of our ascent to the latter point were an English lady and gentleman, brother and sister, and both Catholics, as they at once told us. The lady and myself spoke for some time in the Tuscan tongue before we discovered that neither of us was

Italian, after which we paid each other some handsome compliments upon fluency and perfection of accent. The gentleman was a pleasant purple porpoise from the waters of Chili, whither he had wandered from the English coasts in early youth. He had two leading ideas: one concerned the Pope, to whom he had just been presented, and whom he viewed as the best and blandest of beings; the other related to his boy, then in England, whom he called Jack Spratt, and considered the grandest and greatest of boys. With the view from the roof of the church this gentleman did not much trouble himself. He believed Jack Spratt could ride up to the roof where we stood on his donkey. As to the great bronze globe which we were hurrying to enter, he seemed to regard it merely as a rival in rotundity, and made not the slightest motion to follow us.

I should be loth to vex the reader with any description of the scene before us and beneath us, even if I could faithfully portray it. But I recollect, with a pleasure not to be left unrecorded, the sweetness of the great fountain playing in the square before the church, and the harmony in which the city grew in every direction from it, like an

emanation from its music, till the last house sank away into the pathetic solitude of the Campagna, with nothing beyond but the snow-capped mountains lighting up the remotest distance. At the same moment I experienced a rapture in reflecting that I had underpaid three hackmen during my stay in Rome, and thus contributed to avenge my race for ages of oppression.

The vastness of St. Peter's itself is best felt in looking down upon the interior from the gallery that surrounds the inside of the dome, and in comparing one's own littleness with the greatness of all the neighbouring mosaics. But as to the beauty of the temple, I could not find it without or within.

VI.

IN Rome one's fellow-tourists are a constant source of gratification and surprise. I thought that American travellers were by no means the most absurd among those we saw, nor even the loudest in their approval of the Eternal City. A certain order of German greenness affords, perhaps, the pleasantest pasturage for the ruminating mind. For example, at the Villa Ludovisi there was, beside numerous Englishry in detached bodies, a troop of Germans, — chiefly young

men,—frugally pursuing the Sehenswürdigkeiten in the social manner of their nation. They took their enjoyment very noisily, and wrangled together with furious amiability as they looked at Guercino's "Aurora." Then two of them parted from the rest, and went to a little summer-house in the gardens, while the others followed us to the top of the Casino. There they caught sight of their friends in the arbour, and the spectacle appeared to overwhelm them. They bowed, they took off their hats, they waved their handkerchiefs. It was not enough: one young fellow mounted on the balustrade of the roof at his neck's risk, lifted his hat on his cane, and flourished it in greeting to the heart's-friends in the arbour, from whom he had parted two minutes before.

In strange contrast to the producer of this enthusiasm, so pumped and so unmistakably mixed with beer, a fat and pallid English-woman sat in a chair upon the roof, and coldly, coldly sketched the lovely landscape. And she and the blonde young English girl beside her pronounced a little dialogue together, which I give, because I saw that they meant it for the public—

The Young Girl.—I wonder, you knoa,
you don't draw-ow St. Petuh's!

The Artist.—O ah, you knoa, I can draw-
ow St. Petuh's from so mennee powints.

I am afraid that the worst form of American greenness appears abroad in a desire to be perfectly up in critical appreciation of the arts, and to approach the great works in the spirit of the connoisseur. The ambition is not altogether a bad one. Still I could not help laughing at a fellow-countryman when he told me that he had not yet seen Raphael's "Transfiguration," because he wished to prepare his mind for understanding the original by first looking at all the copies he could find.

VII.

THE Basilica San Paolo fuori le Mura surpasses everything in splendour of marble and costly stone—porphyry, malachite, alabaster—and luxury of gilding that is to be seen at Rome. But I chiefly remember it because on the road that leads to it, through scenes as quiet and peaceful as if history had never known them, lies the Protestant graveyard in which Keats is buried. Quite by chance the driver mentioned it, pointing in the direction of the cemetery with his whip. We eagerly dismounted and repaired to the gate, where we were met by the son

of the sexton, who spoke English through the beauteous line of a curved Hebrew nose. Perhaps a Christian could not be found in Rome to take charge of these heretic graves, though Christians can be got to do almost anything there for money. However, I do not think a Catholic would have kept the place in better order, or more intelligently understood our reverent curiosity. It was the new burial-ground which we had entered, and which is a little to the right of the elder cemetery. It was very beautiful and tasteful in every way ; the names upon the stones were chiefly English and Scotch, with here and there an American's. But affection drew us only to the prostrate tablet inscribed with the words, "Percy Bysshe Shelley, Cor Cordium," and then we were ready to go to the grave of him for whom we all feel so deep a tenderness. The grave of John Keats is one of few in the old burying-ground, and lies almost in the shadow of the pyramid of Caius Cestius ; and I could not help thinking of the wonder the Roman would have felt could he have known into what unnameable richness and beauty his Greek faith had ripened in the heart of the poor poet, where it was mixed with so much sorrow. Doubtless, in his time, a prominent

citizen like Caius Cestius was a leading member of the temple in his neighbourhood, and regularly attended sacrifice : it would have been but decent ; and yet I fancied that a man immersed like him in affairs might have learned with surprise the inner and more fragrant meaning of the symbols with the outside of which his life was satisfied ; and I was glad to reflect that in our day such a thing is impossible.

The grave of our beloved poet is sunken to the level of the common earth, and is only marked by the quaintly lettered, simple stone bearing the famous epitaph. While at Rome I heard talk of another and grander monument which some members of the Keats family were to place over the dust of their great kinsman. But, for one, I hope this may never be done, even though the original stone should also be left there, as was intended. Let the world still keep unchanged this shrine, to which it can repair with at once pity and tenderness and respect.

A rose-tree and some sweet-smelling bushes grew upon the grave, and the roses were in bloom. We asked leave to take one of them ; but at last could only bring ourselves to gather some of the fallen petals. Our Hebrew guide was willing enough, and

unconsciously set us a little example of wantonness ; for while he listened to our explanation of the mystery which had puzzled him ever since he had learned English, namely, why the stone should say "*writ* on water," and not *written*, he kept plucking mechanically at one of the fragrant shrubs, pinching away the leaves, and rending the tender twig, till I, remembering the once sensitive dust from which it grew, waited for the tortured tree to cry out to him with a voice of words and blood, "Perchè mi schianti?"

VIII.

IT seems to me that a candid person will wish to pause a little before condemning Gibson's coloured statues. They have been grossly misrepresented. They do not impress one at all as wax-work, and there is great wrong in saying that their tinted nakedness suggests impurity any more than the white nakedness of other statues. The colouring is quite conventional ; the flesh is merely warmed with the hue representing life ; the hair is always a very delicate yellow, the eyes a tender violet, and there is no other particularisation of colour ; a fillet binding the hair may be gilded,—the

hem of a robe traced in blue. I, who had just come from seeing the fragments of antique statuary in Naples Museum, tinted in the same way, could not feel that there was anything preposterous in Gibson's works, and I am not ashamed to say that they gave me pleasure.

As we passed, in his studio, from one room to another, the workman who showed the marbles surprised and delighted us by asking if we would like to see the sculptor, and took us up into the little room where Gibson worked. He was engaged upon a bas-relief,—a visit of Psyche to the Zephyrs, or something equally aërial and mythological,—and received us very simply and naturally, and at once began with some quaint talk about the subject in hand. When we mentioned our pleasure in his coloured marbles we touched the right spring, and he went on to speak of his favourite theory with visible delight, making occasional pauses to bestow a touch on the bas-relief, and coming back to his theme with that self-corroborative “Yes!” of his, which Hawthorne has immortalised. He was dressed with extraordinary slovenliness and indifference to clothes, had no collar, I think, and evidently did not know what he

had on. Everything about him bespoke the utmost unconsciousness and democratic plainness of life, so that I could readily believe a story I heard of him. Having dined the greater part of his life in Roman restaurants, where it is but wholesome to go over your plate, glass, spoon, and knife and fork with your napkin before using them, the great sculptor had acquired such habits of neatness that at table in the most aristocratic house in England he absent-mindedly went through all that ceremony of cleansing and wiping. It is a story they tell in Rome, where everybody is anecdoted, and not always so good-naturedly.

IX.

ONE Sunday afternoon we went with some artistic friends to visit the studio of the great German painter Overbeck ; and since I first read Uhland I have known no pleasure so illogical as I felt in looking at this painter's drawings. In the sensuous heart of objective Italy he treats the themes of mediaeval Catholicism with the most subjective feeling, and I thought I perceived in his work the enthusiasm which led many Protestant German painters and poets of the romantic school back into the twilight

of the Romish faith, in the hope that they might thus realise to themselves something of the earnestness which animated the elder Christian artists. Overbeck's work is beautiful, but it is unreal, and expresses the sentiment of no time ; as the work of the romantic German poets seems without relation to any world men ever lived in.

Walking from the painter's house, two of us parted with the rest on the steps of the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, and pursued our stroll through the gate of San Lorenzo out upon the Campagna, which tempts and tempts the sojourner at Rome, until at last he must go and see—if it will give him the fever. And, alas ! there I caught the Roman fever—the longing that burns one who has once been in Rome to go again—that will not be cured by all the cool contemptuous things he may think or say of the Eternal City ; that fills him with fond memories of its fascination, and makes it for ever desired.

We walked far down the dusty road beyond the city walls, and then struck out from the highway across the wild meadows of the Campagna. They were weedy and desolate, seamed by shaggy grass-grown ditches, and deeply pitted with holes made

in search for catacombs. There was here and there a farm-house amid the wide lonesomeness, but oftener a round, hollow, roofless tomb, from which the dust and memory of the dead had long been blown away, and through the top of which—fringed and overhung with grasses, and opening like a great eye—the evening sky looked marvellously sad. One of the fields was full of grim, wide-horned cattle, and in another there were four or five buffaloes lying down and chewing their cuds,—holding their heads horizontally in the air, and, with an air of gloomy wickedness which nothing could exceed in their cruel black eyes, glancing about in visible pursuit of some object to toss and gore. There were also many cane-brakes, in which the wind made a mournful rustling after the sun had set in golden glitter on the roofs of the Roman churches and the transparent night had fallen upon the scene.

In all our ramble we met not a soul, and I scarcely know what it is makes this walk upon the Campagna one of my vividest recollections of Rome, unless it be the opportunity it gave me to weary myself upon that many-memoried ground as freely as if it had been a woods-pasture in Ohio.

Nature, where history was so august, was perfectly simple and motherly, and did so much to make me at home, that, as the night thickened and we plunged here and there into ditches and climbed fences, and struggled, heavy-footed, back through the suburbs to the city gate, I felt as if half my boyhood had been passed upon the Campagna.

X.

PASQUINO, like most other great people, is not very interesting upon close approach. There is no trace now in his aspect to show that he has ever been satirical; but the humanity that the sculptor gave him is imperishable, though he has lost all character as a public censor. The torso is at first glance nothing but a shapeless mass of stone, but the life can never die out of that which has been shaped by art to the likeness of a man, and a second look restores the lump to full possession of form and expression. For this reason I lament that statues should ever be restored except by sympathy and imagination.

XI.

REGARDING the face of Pompey's statue in

the Spada Palace, I was more struck than ever with a resemblance to American politicians which I had noted in all the Roman statues. It is a type of face not now to be found in Rome, but frequent enough here, and rather in the South than in the North. Pompey was like the pictures of so many Southern Congressmen that I wondered whether race had not less to do with producing types than had similarity of circumstances; whether a republicanism based upon slavery could not so far assimilate character as to produce a common aspect in people widely separated by time and creeds, but having the same unquestioned habits of command, and the same boundless and unscrupulous ambition.

XII.

WHEN the Tiber, according to its frequent habit, rises and inundates the city, the Pantheon is one of the first places to be flooded —the sacristan told us. The water climbs above the altar-tops, sapping, in its recession, the cement of the fine marbles which incrust the columns, so that about their bases the pieces have to be continually renewed. Nothing vexes you so much in the Pantheon as your consciousness of these and

other repairs. Bad as ruin is, I think I would rather have the old temple ruinous in every part than restored as you find it. The sacristan felt the wrongs of the place keenly, and said, referring to the removal of the bronze roof, which took place some centuries ago, “They have robbed us of everything” (*Ci hanno levato tutto*) ; as if he and the Pantheon were of one blood, and he had suffered personal hurt in its spoliation.

What a sense of the wildness everywhere lurking about Rome we had given us by that group of peasants who had built a fire of brushwood almost within the portico of the Pantheon, and were cooking their supper at it, the light of the flames luridly painting their swarthy faces !

XIII.

Poor little Numero Cinque Via del Gambero has seldom, I imagine, known so violent a sensation as that it experienced when, on the day of the Immaculate Conception, the Armenian Archbishop rolled up to the door in his red coach. The master of the house had always seemed to like us ; now he appeared with profound respect suffusing, as it were, his whole being, and announced, “Signore, it is Monsignore come

to take you to the Sistine Chapel in his carriage," and drew himself up in a line, as much like a series of serving-men as possible, to let us pass out. There was a private carriage for the ladies near that of Monsignore, for he had already advertised us that the sex were not permitted to ride in the red coach. As they appeared, however, he renewed his expressions of desolation at being deprived of their company, and assured them of his good-will with a multiplicity of smiles and nods, intermixed with shrugs of recurrence to his poignant regret. But ! In fine, it was forbidden !

Monsignore was in full costume, with his best ecclesiastical clothes on, and with his great gold chain about his neck. The dress was richer than that of the western archbishops ; and the long white beard of Monsignore made him look much more like a Scriptural monsignore than these. He lacked, perhaps, the fine spiritual grace of his brother, the Archbishop at Venice, to whose letter of introduction we owed his acquaintance and untiring civilities ; but if a man cannot be plump and spiritual, he can be plump and pleasant, as Monsignore was to the last degree. He enlivened our ride with discourse about the Armenians at

Venice, equally beloved of us ; and, arrived at the Sistine Chapel, he marshalled the ladies before him, and won them early entrance through the crowd of English people crushing one another at the door. Then he laid hold upon the captain of the Swiss Guard, who was swift to provide them with the best places ; and in nowise did he seem one of the uninfluential and insignificant priests that About describes the archbishops at Rome to be. According to this lively author, a Swiss guard was striking back the crowd on some occasion with the butt of his halberd, and smote a cardinal on the breast. He instantly dropped upon his knees, with “Pardon, Eminenza ! I thought it was a monsignore !” Even the chief of these handsome fellows had nothing but respect and obedience for our Archbishop.

The gentlemen present were separated from the ladies, and in a very narrow space outside of the chapel men of every nation were penned up together. All talked — several priests as loudly as the rest. But the rudest among them were certain Germans, who not only talked but stood upon a seat to see better, and were ordered down by one of the Swiss with a fierce

“Giù, signore, giù!” Otherwise the guard kept good order in the chapel, and were no doubt as useful and genuine as anything about the poor old Pope. What gorgeous fellows they were, and, as soldiers, how absurd! The weapons they bore were as obsolete as the excommunication. It was amusing to pass one of these play-soldiers on guard at the door of the Vatican — tall, straight, beautiful, superb, with his halberd on his shoulder — and then come to a real warrior outside, a little, ugly, red-legged French sentinel, with his Minié on his arm.

Except for the singing of the Pope's choir — which was angelically sweet, and heavenly far above all praise — the religious ceremonies affected me, like all others of that faith, as tedious and empty. Each of the cardinals, as he entered the chapel, blew a sonorous nose; and was received standing by his brother prelates — a grotesque company of old-womanish old men in gaudy gowns. One of the last to come was Antonelli, who has the very wickedest face in the world. He sat with his eyes fastened upon his book, but obviously open at every pore to all that went on about him. As he passed out he cast gleaming, terrible, sidelong looks upon the people, full of hate and guile.

From where I stood I saw the Pope's face only in profile: it was gentle and benign enough, but not great in expression, and the smile on it almost degenerated into a simper. His Holiness had a cold; and his *recitative*, though full, was not smooth. He was all priest when, in the midst of the service, he hawked, held his handkerchief up before his face, a little way off, and ruthlessly spat in it!

FORZA MAGGIORE.

I IMAGINE that Grosseto is not a town much known to travel, for it is absent from all the guide-books I have looked at. However, it is chief in the Maremma, where sweet Pia de' Tolommei languished and perished of the poisonous air and her love's cruelty, and where, so many mute centuries since, the Etrurian cities flourished and fell. Further, one may say that Grosseto is on the diligence road from Civita Vecchia to Leghorn, and that in the very heart of the place there is a lovely palm-tree, rare, if not sole, in that latitude. This palm stands in a well-sheltered, dull little court, out of everything's way, and turns tenderly toward the wall that shields it on the north. It has no other company but a beautiful young girl, who leans out of a window high over its head, and I have no doubt talks with it. At the moment we discovered the friends, the maiden was looking patheti-

cally to the northward, while the palm softly stirred and opened its plumes, as a bird does when his song is finished ; and there is very little question but it had just been singing to her that song of which the palms are so fond—

“ Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam
Im Norden auf kahler Höh’.”

Grossetto does her utmost to hide the secret of this tree’s existence, as if a hard, matter-of-fact place ought to be ashamed of a sentimentality of the kind. It pretended to be a very worldly town, and tried to keep us in the neighbourhood of its cathedral, where the caffè and shops are, and where, in the evening, four or five officers of the garrison clinked their sabres on the stones, and promenaded up and down, and as many ladies shopped for gloves ; and as many citizens sat at the principal caffè and drank black coffee. This was lively enough ; and we knew that the citizens were talking of the last week’s news and the Roman question ; that the ladies were really looking for loves, not gloves ; that such of the officers as had no local intrigue to keep their hearts at rest were terribly bored, and longed for Florence or Milan or Turin.

Besides the social charms of her piazza,

Grosseto put forth others of an artistic nature. The cathedral was very old and very beautiful,—built of alternate lines of red and white marble, and lately restored in the best spirit of fidelity and reverence. But it was not open, and we were obliged to turn from it to the group of statuary in the middle of the piazza, representative of the Maremma and Family returning thanks to the Grand Duke Leopold III. of Tuscany for his goodness in causing her swamps to be drained. The Maremma and her children are arrayed in the scant draperies of Allegory, but the Grand Duke is fully dressed, and is shown looking down with some surprise at their figures, and with a visible doubt of the propriety of their public appearance in that state.

There was also a Museum at Grosseto, and I wonder what was in it?

The wall of the town was perfect yet, though the moat at its feet had been so long dry that it was only to be known from the adjacent fields by the richness of its soil. The top of the wall had been levelled, and planted with shade, and turned into a peaceful promenade, like most of such mediæval defences in Italy; though I am not sure that a little military life did not still linger

about a bastion here and there. From somewhere, when we strolled out early in the morning, to walk upon the wall, there came to us a throb of drums ; but I believe that the only armed men we saw, beside the officers in the piazza, were the numerous sportsmen resorting at that season to Grossetto for the excellent shooting in the marshes. All the way to Florence we continued to meet them and their dogs ; and our inn at Grossetto overflowed with abundance of game. On the kitchen floor and in the court were heaps of larks, pheasants, quails, and beccafichi, at which a troop of scullion-boys constantly plucked, and from which the great, noble, beautiful, white-aproned cook for ever fried, stewed, broiled, and roasted. We lived chiefly upon these generous birds during our sojourn, and found, when we attempted to vary our bill of fare, that the very genteel waiter attending us had few distinct ideas beyond them. He was part of the repairs and improvements which that hostelry had recently undergone, and had evidently come in with the four-pronged forks, the chromo-lithographs of Victor Emanuel, Garibaldi, Solferino, and Magenta in the large dining-room, and the iron stove in the small one. He had

nothing, evidently, in common with the brick floors of the bedchambers, and the ancient rooms with great fire-places. He strove to give a Florentine blandishment to the rusticity of life in the Maremma ; and we felt sure that he must know what beef-steak was. When we ordered it, he assumed to be perfectly conversant with it, started to bring it, paused, turned, and, with a great sacrifice of personal dignity, demanded “*Bifsteca di manzo, o bifsteca di motone ?*” — “Beefsteak of beef, or beefsteak of mutton ?”

Of Grosseto proper, that is all I remember, if I except a boy whom I heard singing after dark in the streets—

“Camicia rossa, O Garibaldi !”

The cause of our sojourn there was an instance of *forza maggiore*, as the agent of the diligence company defiantly expressed it, in refusing us damages for our overturn into the river. It was in the early part of the winter when we started from Rome for Venice, and we were travelling northward by diligence because the railways were still more or less interrupted by the storms and floods predicted of Matthieu de la Drôme,— the only reliable prophet France has pro-

duced since Voltaire ;—and if our accident was caused by an overruling Providence, the company, according to the very law of its existence, was not responsible. To be sure, we did not see how an overruling Providence was to blame for loading upon our diligence the baggage of two diligences, or for the clumsiness of our driver ; but on the other hand, it is certain that the company did not make it rain or cause the inundation. And, in fine, although we could not have travelled by railway, we were masters to have taken the steamer instead of the diligence at Civita Vecchia.

The choice of either of these means of travel had presented itself in vivid hues of disadvantage all the way from Rome to the Papal port, where the French steamer for Leghorn lay dancing a hornpipe upon the short, chopping waves, while we approached by railway. We had leisure enough to make the decision, if that was all we wanted. Our engine-driver had derived his ideas of progress from an Encyclical Letter, and the train gave every promise of arriving at Civita Vecchia five hundred years behind time. But such was the desolating and depressing influence of the weather and the landscape, that we reached Civita Vecchia

as undecided as we had left Rome. On the one hand, there had been the land, soaked and sodden,—wild, shagged with scrubby growths of timber and brooded over by sullen clouds, and visibly inhabited only by shepherds, leaning upon their staves at an angle of forty-five degrees, and looking, in their immovable dejection, with their legs wrapped in long-haired goat-skins, like satyrs that had been converted, and were trying to do right ; turning dim faces to us, they warned us with every mute appeal against the land, as a waste of mud from one end of Italy to the other. On the other hand, there was the sea-wind raving about our train and threatening to blow it over, and, whenever we drew near the coast, heaping the waves upon the beach in thundering menace.

We weakly and fearfully remembered our former journeys by diligence over broken railway routes ; we recalled our cruel voyage from Genoa to Naples by sea ; and in a state of pitiable dismay we ate five francs' worth at the restaurant of the Civita Vecchia station before we knew it, and long before we had made up our minds. Still we might have lingered and hesitated, and perhaps returned to Rome at last, but for the dramatic

resolution of the old man who solicited passengers for the diligence, and carried their passports for a final Papal *visa* at the police-office. By the account he gave of himself, he was one of the best men in the world, and unique in those parts for honesty and truthfulness ; and he besought us, out of that affectionate interest with which our very aspect had inspired him, not to go by steamer, but to go by diligence, which in nineteen hours would land us safe, and absolutely refreshed by the journey, at the station in Follonica. And now, once, would we go by diligence ? twice, would we go ? three times, would we go ?

“Signore,” said our benefactor angrily, “I lose my time with you ;” and ran away, to be called back in the course of destiny, as he knew well enough, and besought to take us as a special favour.

From the passports he learned that there was official dignity among us, and addressed the unworthy bearer of public honours as Eccellenza, and, at parting, bequeathed his advantage to the conductor, commanding us all in set terms to his courtesy. He hovered caressingly about us as long as we remained, straining politeness to do us some last little service ; and when the diligence rolled away,

he did all that one man could to give us a round of applause.

We laughed together at this silly old man, when out of sight; but we confessed that, if travel in our own country ever came, with advancing corruption, to be treated with the small deceits practised upon it in Italy, it was not likely to be treated with the small civilities also there attendant on it,—and so tried to console ourselves.

At the moment of departure we were surprised to have enter the diligence a fellow-countryman, whom we had first seen on the road from Naples to Rome. He had since crossed our path with that iteration of travel which brings you again and again in view of the same trunks and the same tourists in the round of Europe, and finally in Civita Vecchia he had turned up, a silent spectator of our scene with the agent of the diligence, and had gone off apparently a confirmed passenger by steamer. Perhaps a nearer view of the sailor's hornpipe, as danced by that vessel in the harbour, shook his resolution. At any rate, here he was again, and with his ticket for Follonica,—a bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked man, and we will say a citizen of Portland, though he was not. For the first time in our long acquaintance with one

another's faces, we entered into conversation, and wondered whether we should find brigands or anything to eat on the road, without expectation of finding either. In respect of robbers, we were not disappointed; but shortly after nightfall we stopped at a lonely post-house to change horses, and found that the landlord had so far counted on our appearance as to have, just roasted and fragrantly fuming, a leg of lamb, with certain small fried fish, and a sufficiency of bread. It was a very lonely place, as I say; the sky was gloomy overhead; and the wildness of the landscape all about us gave our provision quite a gamy flavour; and brigands could have added nothing to our sense of solitude.

The road creeps along the coast for some distance from Civita Vecchia, within hearing of the sea, and nowhere widely forsakes it, I believe, all the way to Follonica. The country is hilly, and we stopped every two hours to change horses; at which times we looked out, and, seeing that it was a grey and windy night, though not rainy, exulted that we had not taken the steamer. With very little change, the wisdom of our decision in favour of the diligence formed the burden of our talk during the whole night; and to

think of eluded sea-sickness requited us in the agony of our break-neck efforts to catch a little sleep, as, mounted upon our nightmares, we rode steeplechases up and down the highways and byways of horror. Anything that absolutely awakened us was accounted a blessing; and I remember few things in life with so keen a pleasure as the summons that came to us to descend from our places and cross a river in one boat, while the two diligences of our train followed in another. Here we had time to see our fellow-passengers, as the pulsating light of their cigars illuminated their faces, and to discover among them that Italian, common to all large companies, who speaks English, and is very eager to practise it with you,—who is such a benefactor if you do not know his own language, and such a bore if you do. After this, being landed, it was rapture to stroll up and down the good road, and feel it hard and real under our feet, and not an abysmal impalpability, while all the grim shapes of our dreams fled to the spectral line of small boats sustaining the ferry-barge, and swaying slowly from it as the drowned men at their keels tugged them against the tide.

“*S’ accommodino, signori!*” cries the

cheerful voice of the conductor, and we ascend to our places in the diligence. The nightmares are brought out again; we mount, and renew the steeplechase as before.

Suddenly, it all comes to an end, and we sit wide awake in the diligence, amid a silence only broken by the hiss of rain against the windows, and the sweep of gusts upon the roof. The diligence stands still; there is no rattle of harness, nor other sound to prove that we have arrived at the spot by other means than dropping from the clouds. The idea that we are passengers in the last diligence destroyed before the Deluge, and are now waiting our fate on the highest ground accessible to wheels, fades away as the day dimly breaks, and we find ourselves planted, as the Italians say, on the banks of another river. There is no longer any visible conductor, the horses have been spirited away, the driver has vanished.

The rain beats and beats upon the roof, and begins to drop through upon us in great, wrathful tears, while the river before us rushes away with a momently swelling flood. Enter now from the depths of the storm, a number of rainy peasants, with our conductor and driver perfectly water-logged,

and group themselves on the low, muddy shore, near a flat ferry-barge, evidently wanting but a hint of *forza maggiore* to go down with anything put into it. A moment they dispute in pantomime, sending now and then a windy tone of protest and expostulation to our ears, and then they drop into a motionless silence, and stand there in the tempest, not braving it, but enduring it with the pathetic resignation of their race, as if it were some form of hopeless political oppression. At last comes the conductor to us and says, It is impossible for our diligences to cross in the boat, and he has sent for others to meet us on the opposite shore. He expected them long before this, but we see ! They are not come. Patience and malediction !

Remaining planted in these unfriendly circumstances from four o'clock till ten, we have still the effrontery to be glad that we did not take the steamer. What a storm that must be at sea ! When at last our connecting diligences appear on the other shore, we are almost light-hearted, and make a jest of the Ombrone, as we perilously pass it in the ferry-boat too weak for our diligences. Between the landing and the vehicles there is a space of heavy mud to

cross, and when we reach them we find the *coupé* appointed us occupied by three young Englishmen, who insist that they shall be driven to the boat. With that graceful superiority which endears their nation to the world, and makes the travelling Englishman a universal favourite, they keep the seats to which they have no longer any right, while the tempest drenches the ladies to whom the places belong ; and it is only by the *forza maggiore* of our conductor that they can be dislodged. In the meantime the Portland man exchanges with them the assurances of personal and national esteem, which that mighty bond of friendship, the language of Shakespeare and Milton, enables us to offer so idiomatically to our transatlantic cousins.

What Grossetto was like, as we first rode through it, we scarcely looked to see. In four or five hours we should strike the railroad at Follonica ; and we merely asked of intermediate places that they should not detain us. We dined in Grossetto at an inn of the Larthian period,—a cold inn and a damp, which seemed never to have been swept since the broom dropped from the grasp of the last Etrurian chambermaid,—and we ate with the two-pronged iron forks

of an extinct civilisation. All the while we dined, a boy tried to kindle a fire to warm us, and beguiled his incessant failures with stories of inundation on the road ahead of us. But we believed him so little, that when he said a certain stream near Grosseto was impassable, our company all but hissed him.

When we left the town and hurried into the open country, we perceived that he had only too great reason to be an alarmist. Every little rill was risen, and boiling over with the pride of harm, and the broad fields lay hid under the yellow waters that here and there washed over the road. Yet the freshet only presented itself to us as a pleasant excitement; and even when we came to a place where the road itself was covered for a quarter of a mile, we scarcely looked outside the diligence to see how deep the water was. We were surprised when our horses were brought to a stand on a rising ground, and the conductor, cap in hand, appeared at the door. He was a fat, well-natured man, full of a smiling good-will; and he stood before us in a radiant desperation.

Would Eccellenza descend, look at the water in front, and decide whether to go

on? The conductor desired to content; it displeased him to delay,—*ma, in somma!*—the rest was confided to the conductor's eloquent shoulders and eyebrows.

Eccellenza, descending, beheld but a disheartening prospect. On every hand the country was under water. The two diligences stood on a stone bridge spanning the stream, that, now swollen to an angry torrent, brawled over a hundred yards of the road before us. Beyond, the ground rose, and on its slope stood a farm-house up to its second story in water. Without the slightest hope in his purpose, and merely as an experiment, Eccellenza suggested that a man should be sent in on horseback; which being done, man and horse in a moment floundered into swimming-depths.

The conductor, vigilantly regarding Eccellenza, gave a great shrug of desolation.

Eccellenza replied with a foreigner's broken shrug,—a shrug of sufficiently correct construction, but wanting the tonic accent, as one may say, though expressing, however imperfectly, an equal desolation.

It appeared to be the part of wisdom not to go ahead, but to go back if we could; and we re-entered the water we had just crossed. It had risen a little meanwhile, and the road

could now be traced only by the telegraphpoles. The diligence before us went safely through ; but our driver, trusting rather to inspiration than precedent, did not follow it carefully, and directly drove us over the side of a small viaduct. All the baggage of the train having been lodged upon the roof of our diligence, the unwieldy vehicle now lurched heavily, hesitated, as if preparing, like Cæsar, to fall decently, and went over on its side with a stately deliberation that gave us ample time to arrange our plans for getting out.

The torrent was only some three feet deep, but it was swift and muddy, and it was with a fine sense of shipwreck that Eccellenza felt his boots filling with water, while a conviction that it would have been better, after all, to have taken the steamer, struck coldly home to him. We opened the window in the top side of the diligence, and lifted the ladies through it, and the conductor, in the character of lifeboat, bore them ashore ; while the driver cursed his horses in a sullen whisper, and could with difficulty be diverted from that employment to cut the lines and save one of them from drowning.

Here our compatriot, whose conversation

with the Englishman at the Ombrone we had lately admired, showed traits of strict and severe method which afterward came into even bolder relief. The ladies being rescued, he applied himself to the rescue of their hats, cloaks, rubbers, muffs, books, and bags, and handed them up through the window with tireless perseverance, making an effort to wring or dry each article in turn. The other gentleman on top received them all rather grimly, and had not perhaps been amused by the situation but for the exploit of his hat. It was of the sort called in Italian as in English slang a stove-pipe (*canna*), and having been made in Italy, it was of course too large for its wearer. It had never been anything but a horror and reproach to him, and he was now inexpressibly delighted to see it steal out of the diligence in company with one of the red-leather cushions, and glide darkly down the flood. It nodded and nodded to the cushion with a superhuman tenderness and elegance, and had a preposterous air of whispering, as it drifted out of sight—

“ It may be we shall reach the Happy Isles,—
It may be that the gulfs shall wash us down.”

The romantic interest of this episode had hardly died away, when our adventure ac-

quired an idyllic flavour from the appearance on the scene of four peasants in an ox-cart. These the conductor tried to engage to bring out the baggage and right the fallen diligence ; and they, after making him a little speech upon the value of their health, which might be injured, asked him, tentatively, two hundred francs for the service. The simple incident enforced the fact already known to us,—that, if Italians sometimes take advantage of strangers, they are equally willing to prey upon each other ; but I doubt if anything could have taught a foreigner the sweetness with which our conductor bore the enormity, and turned quietly from those brigands to carry the Portland man from the wreck, on which he lingered, to the shore.

Here in the gathering twilight the passengers of both diligences grouped themselves, and made merry over the common disaster. As the conductor and the drivers brought off the luggage, our spirits rose with the arrival of each trunk, and we were pleased or not as we found it soaked or dry. We applauded and admired the greater sufferers among us : a lady who opened a dripping box was felt to have perpetrated a pleasantry ; and a Brazilian gentleman, whose

luggage dropped to pieces and was scattered in the flood about the diligence, was looked upon as a very subtle humorist. Our own contribution to these witty passages was the epigrammatic display of a reeking trunk full of the pretty rubbish people bring away from Rome and Naples,— copies of Pompeian frescoes more ruinous than the originals ; photographs floating loose from their cards ; little earthen busts reduced to the lumpishness of common clay ; Roman scarfs stained and blotted out of all memory of their recent hues ; Roman pearls clinging together in clammy masses.

We were a band of brothers and sisters, as we all crowded into one diligence and returned to Grossetto. Arrived there, our party, knowing that a public conveyance in Italy—and everywhere else—always stops at the worst inn in a place, made bold to seek another, and found it without ado, though the person who undertook to show it spoke of it mysteriously and as of difficult access, and tried to make the simple affair as like a scene of grand opera as he could.

We took one of the ancient rooms in which there was a vast fire-place, as already mentioned, and we there kindled such a fire

as could not have been known in that fuel-sparing land for ages. The drying of the clothes was an affair that drew out all the energy and method of our compatriot, and at a late hour we left him moving about among the garments that dangled and dripped from pegs and hooks and lines, dealing with them as a physician with his sick, and tenderly nursing his dress-coat, which he wrung and shook and smoothed and pulled this way and that with a never-satisfied anxiety. At midnight, he hired a watcher to keep up the fire and turn the steaming raiment, and, returning at four o'clock, found his watcher dead asleep before the empty fire-place. But I rather applaud than blame the watcher for this. He must have been a man of iron nerve to fall asleep amid all the phantasmal show of masks and disguises. What if those reeking silks had forgotten their nails, and, decking themselves with the blotted Roman scarfs and the slimy Roman pearls, had invited the dress-coats to look over the dripping photographs? Or if all those drowned garments had assumed the characters of the people whom they had grown to resemble, and had sat down to hear the shade of Pia de' Tolommei rehearse the story of her sad fate in the Maremma?—I say, if a watcher

could sleep in such company, he was right to do so.

On the third day after our return to Grosseto, we gathered together our damaged effects, and packed them into refractory trunks. Then we held the customary discussion with the landlord concerning the effrontery of his account, and drove off once more toward Follonica. We could scarcely recognise the route for the one we had recently passed over ; and it was not until we came to the scene of our wreck, and found the diligence stranded high and dry upon the roadside, that we could believe the whole landscape about us had been flooded three days before. The offending stream had shrunk back to its channel, and now seemed to feign an unconsciousness of its late excess, and had a virtuous air of not knowing how in the world to account for that upturned diligence. The waters, we learned, had begun to subside the night after our disaster ; and the vehicle might have been righted and drawn off—for it was not in the least injured—forty-eight hours previously ; but I suppose it was not *en règle* to touch it without orders from Rome. I picture it to myself still lying there, in the

heart of the marshes, and thrilling sympathetic travel with the spectacle of its ultimate ruin—

“Disfecemi Maremma.”

We reached Follonica at last, and then the cars hurried us to Leghorn. We were thoroughly humbled in spirit, and had no longer any doubt that we did ill to take the diligence at Civita Vecchia instead of the steamer; for we had been, not nineteen hours, but four days on the road, and we had suffered as afore-mentioned.

But we were destined to be partially restored to our self-esteem, if not entirely comforted for our losses, when we sat down to dinner in the Hotel Washington, and the urbane head-waiter, catching the drift of our English discourse, asked us—

“Have the signori heard that the French steamer, which left Civita Vecchia the same day with their diligence, had to put back and lie in port more than two days on account of the storm? She is but now come into Leghorn, after a very dangerous passage.”

AT PADUA.

I.

THOSE of my readers who have frequented the garden of Doctor Rappaccini no doubt recall with perfect distinctness the quaint old city of Padua. They remember its miles and miles of dim arcade over-roofing the side-walks everywhere, affording excellent opportunity for the flirtation of lovers by day and the vengeance of rivals by night. They have seen the now-vacant streets thronged with maskers, and the Venetian Podestà going in gorgeous state to and from the vast Palazzo della Ragione. They have witnessed ringing tournaments in those sad empty squares, and races in the Prato della Valle, and many other wonders of different epochs, and their pleasure makes me half-sorry that I should have lived for several years within an hour by rail from Padua, and should know little or nothing of these great sights from actual observation. I take shame to myself for having visited

Padua so often and so familiarly as I used to do,—for having been bored and hungry there,—for having had toothache there, upon one occasion,—for having rejoiced more in a cup of coffee at Pedrocchi's than in the whole history of Padua,—for having slept repeatedly in the bad-bedded hotels of Padua, and never once dreamt of Portia,—for having been more taken by the *salti mortali*¹ of a waiter who summed up my account at a Paduan restaurant, than by all the strategies with which the city has been many times captured and recaptured. Had I viewed Padua only over the wall of Doctor Rappaccini's garden, how different my impressions of the city would now be ! This is one of the drawbacks of actual knowledge. “ Ah ! how can you write about Spain when once you have been there ? ” asked Heine of Théophile Gautier setting out on a journey thither.

Nevertheless it seems to me that I remember something about Padua with a sort of romantic pleasure. There was a certain charm, which I can dimly recall, in saunter-

¹ *Salti mortali* are those prodigious efforts of mental arithmetic by which Italian waiters, in verbally presenting your account, arrive at six as the product of two and two.

ing along the top of the old wall of the city, and looking down upon the plump crests of the Indian corn that flourished up so mightily from the dry bed of the moat. At such times I could not help figuring to myself the many sieges that the wall had known, with the fierce assault by day, the secret attack by night, the swarming foe upon the plains below, the bristling arms of the besieged upon the wall, the boom of the great mortars made of ropes and leather and throwing mighty balls of stone, the stormy flight of arrows, the ladders planted against the defences and staggering headlong into the moat, enriched for future agriculture not only by its sluggish waters, but by the blood of many men. I suppose that most of these visions were old stage spectacles furbished up anew, and that my armies were chiefly equipped with their obsolete implements of warfare from museums of armour and from cabinets of antiquities ; but they were very vivid for all that.

I was never able, in passing a certain one of the city gates, to divest myself of an historic interest in the great loads of hay waiting admission on the outside. For an instant they masked again the Venetian troops that, in the War of the League of

Cambray, entered the city in the hay-carts, shot down the landsknechts at the gates, and, uniting with the citizens, cut the German garrison to pieces. But it was a thing long past. The German garrison was here again ; and the heirs of the landsknechts went clanking through the gate to the parade-ground, with that fierce clamour of their kettle-drums which is so much fiercer because unmingled with the noise of fifes. Once more now the Germans are gone, and, let us trust, for ever ; but when I saw them, there seemed little hope of their going. They had a great Biergarten on the top of the wall, and they had set up the altars of their heavy Bacchus in many parts of the city.

I please myself with thinking that, if I walked on such a spring day as this in the arcaded Paduan streets, I should catch glimpses, through the gateways of the palaces, of gardens full of vivid bloom, and of fountains that tinkle there for ever. If it were autumn, and I were in the great market-place before the Palazzo della Ragione, I should hear the baskets of amber-hued and honeyed grapes humming with the murmur of multitudinous bees, and making a music as if the wine itself were already singing in their gentle hearts.

It is a great field of succulent verdure, that wide old market-place ; and fancy loves to browse about among its gay stores of fruits and vegetables, brought thither by the world-old peasant-women who have been bringing fruits and vegetables to the Paduan market for so many centuries. They sit upon the ground before their great panniers, and knit and doze, and wake up with a drowsy "*Comandala?*" as you linger to look at their grapes. They have each a pair of scales,—the emblem of Injustice,—and will weigh you out a scant measure of the fruit if you like. Their faces are yellow as parchment, and Time has written them so full of wrinkles that there is not room for another line. Doubtless these old parchment visages are palimpsests, and would tell the whole history of Padua if you could get at each successive inscription. Among their primal records there must be some account of the Roman city, as each little contadinella remembered it on market-days ; and one might read of the terror of Attila's sack, a little later, with the peasant-maid's personal recollection of the bold Hunnish trooper who ate up the grapes in her basket, and kissed her hard, round red cheeks,—for in that time she was a blooming girl,—and

paid nothing for either privilege. What wild and confused reminiscences on the wrinkled visage we should find thereafter of the fierce republican times, of Eccelino, of the Carraras, of the Venetian rule ! And is it not sad to think of systems and peoples all passing away, and these ancient women lasting still, and still selling grapes in front of the Palazzo della Ragione ? What a long mortality !

The youngest of their number is a thousand years older than the palace, which was begun in the twelfth century, and which is much the same now as it was when first completed. I know that, if I entered it, I should be sure of finding the great hall of the palace—the vastest hall in the world—dim and dull and dusty and delightful, with nothing in it except at one end Donatello's colossal marble-headed wooden horse of Troy, stared at from the other end by the two dog-faced Egyptian women in basalt placed there by Belzoni.

Late in the drowsy summer afternoons I should have the Court of the University all to myself, and might study unmolested the blazons of the noble youth who have attended the school in different centuries ever since 1200, and have left their escutcheons on the walls to commemorate them. At

the foot of the stairway ascending to the schools from the court is the statue of the learned lady who was once a professor in the University, and who, if her likeness belie not her looks, must have given a great charm to student life in other times. At present there are no lady professors at Padua any more than at Harvard ; and during late years the schools have suffered greatly from the interference of the Austrian Government, which frequently closed them for months, on account of political demonstrations among the students. But now there is an end of this and many other stupid oppressions ; and the time-honoured University will doubtless regain its ancient importance. Even in 1864 it had nearly fifteen hundred students, and one met them everywhere under the arcades, and could not well mistake them, with that blended air of pirate and dandy which these studious young men loved to assume. They were to be seen a good deal on the promenades outside the walls, where the Paduan ladies are driven in their carriages in the afternoon, and where one sees the blood-horses and fine equipages for which Padua is famous. There used once to be races in the Prato della Valle, after the Italian notion of horse-races ; but these are now discontinued,

and there is nothing to be found there but the statues of scholars and soldiers and statesmen, posted in a circle around the old race-course. If you strolled thither about dusk on such a day as this, you might see the statues unbend a little from their stony rigidity, and in the failing light nod to each other very pleasantly through the trees. And if you stayed in Padua over night, what could be better to-morrow morning than a stroll through the great Botanical Garden—the oldest botanical garden in the world,—the garden which first received in Europe the strange and splendid growths of our hemisphere,—the garden where Doctor Rappaccini doubtless found the germ of his mortal plant?

On the whole, I believe I would rather go this moment to Padua than to Lowell or Lawrence, or even to Worcester ; and as to the disadvantage of having seen Padua, I begin to think the whole place has now assumed so fantastic a character in my mind that I am almost as well qualified to write of it as if I had merely dreamed it.

The day that we first visited the city was very rainy, and we spent most of the time in viewing the churches. These, even after the churches of Venice, one finds rich in art and historic interest, and they in no instance fall

into the maniacal excesses of the Renaissance to which some of the temples of the latter city abandon themselves. Their architecture forms a sort of border-land between the Byzantine of Venice and the Lombardic of Verona. The superb domes of St. Anthony's emulate those of St. Mark's ; and the porticoes of other Paduan churches rest upon the backs of bird-headed lions and leopards that fascinate with their mystery and beauty.

It was the wish to see the attributive Giottos in the Chapter which drew us first to St. Anthony's, and we saw them with the satisfaction naturally attending the contemplation of frescoes discovered only since 1858, after having been hidden under plaster and whitewash for many centuries ; but we could not believe that Giotto's fame was destined to gain much by their rescue from oblivion. They are in nowise to be compared with this master's frescoes in the Chapel of the Annunziata,—which, indeed, is in every way a place of wonder and delight. You reach it by passing through a garden lane bordered with roses, and a taciturn gardener comes out with clinking keys, and lets you into the chapel, where there is nobody but Giotto and Dante, nor seems to have been for ages. Cool it is, and of a pulverous smell, as a

sacred place should be ; a blessed benching goes round the walls, and you sit down and take unlimited comfort in the frescoes. The gardener leaves you alone to the solitude and the silence, in which the talk of the painter and the exile is plain enough. Their contemporaries and yours are cordial in their gay companionship : through the half-open door falls, in a pause of the rain, the same sunshine that they saw lie there ; the deathless birds that they heard sing out in the garden trees ; it is the fresh sweetness of the grass mown so many hundred years ago that breathes through all the lovely garden grounds.

But in the midst of this pleasant communion with the past, you have a lurking pain ; for you have hired your brougham by the hour ; and you presently quit the Chapel of Giotto on this account.

We had chosen our driver from among many other drivers of broughams in the vicinity of Pedrocchi's, because he had such an honest look, and was not likely, we thought, to deal unfairly with us.

“ But first,” said the signor who had selected him, “ how much is your brougham an hour ? ”

So and so.

“ Show me the tariff of fares.”

“ There is no tariff.”

“ There is. Show it to me.”

“ It is lost, signor.”

“ I think not. It is here in this pocket. Get it out.”

The tariff appears, and with it the fact that he had demanded just what the boatman of the ballad received in gift,—thrice his fee.

The driver mounted his seat, and served us so faithfully that day in Padua that we took him the next day for Arquà. At the end, when he had received his due, and a handsome *mancia* besides, he was still unsatisfied, and referred to the tariff in proof that he had been underpaid. On that confronted and defeated, he thanked us very cordially, gave us the number of his brougham, and begged us to ask for him when we came next to Padua and needed a carriage.

From the Chapel of the Annunziata he drove us to the Church of Santa Giustina, where is a very famous and noble picture by Romanino. But as this writing has nothing in the world to do with art, I here dismiss that subject, and with a gross and idle delight follow the sacristan down under the church to the prison of Santa Giustina.

Of all the faculties of the mind there is none so little fatiguing to exercise as mere

wonder ; and, for my own sake, I try always to wonder at things without the least critical reservation. I therefore, in the sense of deglutition, bolted this prison at once, though subsequent experiences led me to look with grave indigestion upon the whole idea of prisons, their authenticity, and even their existence.

As far as mere dimensions are concerned, the prison of Santa Giustina was not a hard one to swallow, being only three feet wide by about ten feet in length. In this limited space, Santa Giustina passed five years of the paternal reign of Nero (a virtuous and a long-suffering prince, whom, singularly enough, no historic artist has yet arisen to whitewash), and was then brought out into the larger cell adjoining, to suffer a blessed martyrdom. I am not sure now whether the sacristan said she was dashed to death on the stones, or cut to pieces with knives ; but, whatever the form of martyrdom, an iron ring in the ceiling was employed in it, as I know from seeing the ring,—a curiously well-preserved piece of ironmongery. Within the narrow prison of the saint, and just under the grating, through which the sacristan thrust his candle to illuminate it, was a mountain of candle-drippings,—a monument to the fact that faith still largely exists in

this doubting world. My own credulity, not only with regard to this prison, but also touching the coffin of St. Luke, which I saw in the church, had so wrought upon the esteem of the sacristan, that he now took me to a well, into which, he said, had been cast the bones of three thousand Christian martyrs. He lowered a lantern into the well, and assured me that, if I looked through a certain screenwork there, I could see the bones. On experiment I could not see the bones, but this circumstance did not cause me to doubt their presence, particularly as I did see upon the screen a great number of coins offered for the repose of the martyrs' souls. I threw down some *soldi*, and thus enthralled the sacristan.

If the signor cared to see prisons, he said, the driver must take him to those of Eccelino, at present the property of a private gentleman near by. As I had just bought a history of Eccelino, at a great bargain, from a second-hand book-stall, and had a lively interest in all the enormities of that nobleman, I sped the driver instantly to the villa of the Signor P—.

It depends here altogether upon the freshness or mustiness of the reader's historical reading whether he cares to be reminded

more particularly who Eccelino was. He flourished balefully in the early half of the thirteenth century as lord of Vicenza, Verona, Padua, and Brescia, and was defeated and hurt to death in an attempt to possess himself of Milan. He was in every respect a remarkable man for that time,—fearless, abstemious, continent, avaricious, hardy, and unspeakably ambitious and cruel. He survived and suppressed innumerable conspiracies, escaping even the thrust of the assassin whom the fame of his enormous wickedness had caused the Old Man of the Mountain to send against him. As lord of Padua he was more incredibly severe and bloody in his rule than as lord of the other cities, for the Paduans had been latest free, and conspired the most frequently against him. He extirpated whole families on suspicion that a single member had been concerned in a meditated revolt. Little children and helpless women suffered hideous mutilation and shame at his hands. Six prisons in Padua were constantly filled by his arrests. The whole country was traversed by witnesses of his cruelties,—men and women deprived of an arm or leg, and begging from door to door. He had long been excommunicated ; at last the Church pro-

claimed a crusade against him, and his lieutenant and nephew—more demoniacal, if possible, than himself—was driven out of Padua while he was operating against Mantua. Eccelino retired to Verona, and maintained a struggle against the crusade for nearly two years longer, with a courage which never failed him. Wounded and taken prisoner, the soldiers of the victorious army gathered about him, and heaped insult and reproach upon him ; and one furious peasant, whose brother's feet had been cut off by Eccelino's command, dealt the helpless monster four blows upon the head with a scythe. By some, Eccelino is said to have died of these wounds alone ; but by others it is related that his death was a kind of suicide, inasmuch as he himself put the case past surgery by tearing off the bandages from his hurts, and refusing all medicines.

II.

ENTERING at the enchanted portal of the Villa P—, we found ourselves in a realm of wonder. It was our misfortune not to see the magician who compelled all the marvels on which we looked, but for that very reason, perhaps, we have the clearest sense of his greatness. Everywhere we beheld the evi-

dences of his ingenious but lugubrious fancy, which everywhere tended to a monumental and mortuary effect. A sort of vestibule first received us, and beyond this dripped and glimmered the garden. The walls of the vestibule were covered with inscriptions setting forth the sentiments of the philosophy and piety of all ages concerning life and death ; we began with Confucius, and we ended with Benamino Franklino. But as if these ideas of mortality were not sufficiently depressing, the funereal Signor P—— had collected into earthen *amphoræ* the ashes of the most famous men of ancient and modern times, and arranged them so that a sense of their number and variety should at once strike his visitor. Each jar was conspicuously labelled with the name its illustrious dust had borne in life ; and if one escaped with comparative cheerfulness from the thought that Seneca had died, there were in the very next pot the cinders of Napoleon to bully him back to a sense of his mortality.

We were glad to have the gloomy fascination of these objects broken by the custodian, who approached to ask if we wished to see the prisons of Eccelino, and we willingly followed him into the rain out of our sepulchral shelter.

Between the vestibule and the towers of the tyrant lay that garden already mentioned, and our guide led us through ranks of weeping statuary, and rainy bowers, and showery lanes of shrubbery, until we reached the door of his cottage. While he entered to fetch the key to the prisons, we noted that the towers were freshly painted and in perfect repair; and indeed the custodian said frankly enough, on reappearing, that they were merely built over the prisons on the site of the original towers. The storied stream of the Bacchiglione sweeps through the grounds, and now, swollen by the rainfall, it roared, a yellow torrent, under a corner of the prisons. The towers rise from masses of foliage, and form no unpleasing feature of what must be, in spite of Signor P—, a delightful Italian garden in sunny weather. The ground is not so flat as elsewhere in Padua, and this inequality gives an additional picturesqueness to the place. But as we were come in search of horrors, we scorned these merely lovely things, and hastened to immure ourselves in the dungeons below. The custodian, lighting a candle (which ought, we felt, to have been a torch), went before.

We found the cells, though narrow and

dark, not uncomfortable, and the guide conceded that they had undergone some repairs since Eccelino's time. But all the horrors for which we had come were there in perfect grisliness, and labelled by the ingenious Signor P—— with Latin inscriptions.

In the first cell was a shrine of the Virgin, set in the wall. Beneath this, while the wretched prisoner knelt in prayer, a trap-door opened and precipitated him upon the points of knives, from which his body fell into the Bacchiglione below. In the next cell, held by some rusty iron rings to the wall, was a skeleton, hanging by the wrists.

"This," said the guide, "was another punishment of which Eccelino was very fond."

A dreadful doubt seized my mind. "Was this skeleton found here?" I demanded.

Without faltering an instant, without so much as winking an eye, the custodian replied, "*Appunto.*"

It was a great relief, and restored me to confidence in the establishment. I am at a loss to explain how my faith should have been confirmed afterwards by coming upon a guillotine—an awful instrument in the likeness of a straw-cutter, with a decapitated wooden figure under its blade—which the custodian confessed to be a modern im-

provement placed there by Signor P—. Yet my credulity was so strengthened by his candour, that I accepted without hesitation the torture of the water-drop when we came to it. The water-jar was as well preserved as if placed there but yesterday, and the skeleton beneath it—found as we saw it—was entire and perfect.

In the adjoining cell sat a skeleton—found as we saw it—with its neck in the clutch of the garrote, which was one of Eccelino's more merciful punishments; while in still another cell the ferocity of the tyrant appeared in the penalty inflicted upon the wretch whose skeleton had been hanging for ages—as we saw it—head downwards from the ceiling.

Beyond these, in a yet darker and drearier dungeon, stood a heavy oblong wooden box, with two apertures near the top, peering through which we found that we were looking into the eyeless sockets of a skull. Within this box Eccelino had immured the victim we beheld there, and left him to perish in view of the platters of food and goblets of drink placed just beyond the reach of his hands. The food we saw was of course not the original food.

At last we came to the crowning horror of Villa P—, the supreme excess of Eccelino's

cruelty. The guide entered the cell before us, and, as we gained the threshold, threw the light of his taper vividly upon a block that stood in the middle of the floor. Fixed to the block by an immense spike driven through from the back was the little slender hand of a woman, which lay there just as it had been struck from the living arm, and which, after the lapse of so many centuries, was still as perfectly preserved as if it had been embalmed. The sight had a most cruel fascination ; and, while one of the horror-seekers stood helplessly conjuring to his vision that scene of unknown dread,—the shrinking, shrieking woman dragged to the block, the wild, shrill, horrible screech following the blow that drove in the spike, the merciful swoon after the mutilation,—his companion, with a sudden pallor, demanded to be taken instantly away.

In their swift withdrawal, they only glanced at a few detached instruments of torture,—all original Eccelinos, but intended for the infliction of minor and comparatively unimportant torments,—and then they passed from that place of fear.

III.

IN the evening we sat talking at the Caffè

Pedrocchi with an abbate, an acquaintance of ours, who was a professor in the University of Padua. Pedrocchi's is the great caffè of Padua, a granite edifice of Egyptian architecture, which is the mausoleum of the proprietor's fortune. The pecuniary skeleton at the feast, however, does not much trouble the guests. They begin early in the evening to gather into the elegant saloons of the caffè,—somewhat too large for so small a city as Padua,—and they sit there late in the night over their cheerful cups and their ices, with their newspapers and their talk. Not so many ladies are to be seen as at the caffè in Venice, for it is only in the greater cities that they go much to these public places. There are few students at Pedrocchi's, for they frequent the cheaper caffè ; but you may nearly always find there some professor of the University, and on the evening of which I speak there were two present besides our abbate. Our friend's great passion was the English language, which he understood too well to venture to speak a great deal. He had been translating from that tongue into Italian certain American poems, and our talk was of these at first. Then we began to talk of distinguished American writers, of whom intelli-

gent Italians always know at least four, in this succession,—Cooper, Mrs. Stowe, Longfellow, and Irving. Mrs. Stowe's *Capanna di Zio Tom* is, of course, universally read; and my friend had also read *Il Fiorre di Maggio*,—"The May-flower." Of Longfellow, the "Evangeline" is familiar to Italians, through a translation of the poem; but our abbate knew all the poet's works, and one of the other professors present that evening had made such faithful study of them as to have produced some translations, rendering the original with remarkable fidelity and spirit. I have before me here this *brochure*, printed last year at Padua, and containing versions of "Enceladus," "Excelsior," "A Psalm of Life," "The Old Clock on the Stairs," "Sand of the Desert in an Hour-Glass," "Twilight," "Daybreak," "The Quadroon Girl," and "Torquemada,"—pieces which give the Italians a fair notion of our poet's lyrical range, and which bear witness to Professor Messadaglia's sympathetic and familiar knowledge of his works. A young and gifted lady of Parma, now unhappily no more, lately published a translation of "The Golden Legend;" and Professor Messadaglia, in his preface, mentions a version of another of

our poet's longer works, on which the translator of the "Evangeline" is now engaged.

At last, turning from literature, we spoke with the gentle abbate of our day's adventures, and eagerly related that of the Eccelino prisons. To have seen them was the most terrific pleasure of our lives.

"Eh!" said our friend, "I believe you."

"We mean those under the Villa P——."

"Exactly."

There was a tone of politely suppressed amusement in the abbate's voice; and after a moment's pause, in which we felt our awful experience slipping and sliding away from us, we ventured to say, "You don't mean that those are *not* the veritable Eccelino prisons?"

"Certainly they are nothing of the kind. The Eccelino prisons were destroyed when the Crusaders took Padua, with the exception of the tower, which the Venetian Republic converted into an observatory."

"But at least these prisons are on the site of Eccelino's castle?"

"Nothing of the sort. His castle in that case would have been outside of the old city walls."

"And those tortures and the prisons are all"—

"Things got up for show. No doubt,

Eccelino used such things, and many worse, of which even the ingenuity of Signor P—— cannot conceive. But he is an eccentric man, loving the horrors of history, and what he can do to realise them he has done in his prisons."

"But the custodian—how could he lie so?"

Our friend shrugged his shoulders. "Eh! Easily. And perhaps he even believed what he said."

The world began to assume an aspect of bewildering ungenuineness, and there seemed to be a treacherous quality of fiction in the ground under our feet. Even the play at the pretty little Teatro Sociale, where we went to pass the rest of the evening, appeared hollow and improbable. We thought the hero something of a bore, with his patience and goodness; and as for the heroine, pursued by the attentions of the rich profligate, we doubted if she were any better than she should be

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